

THE
COMPLAINT:
OR,
NIGHT-THOUGHTS
ON
LIFE, DEATH,
AND
IMMORTALITY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
A PARAPHRASE ON PART OF THE
BOOK OF JOB.

Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.
VIRG.

VOL. II.

GLASGOW:
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NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY;

O R,

The MAN of the WORLD Answered.

In which are Considered,

The LOVE of this LIFE;

The AMBITION and PLEASURE, with the WIT
and WISDOM of the WORLD.

VOL. II.



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C O M P L A I N T.

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

AND has all nature, then, espous'd my part?
Have I brib'd heaven, and earth, to plead against
thee?

And is thy soul immortal?—what remains?
All, all, Lorenzo; make immortal, blest.
Unblest immortals! what can shock us more?
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;
There, flows his treasure; thence, his title draws,
Man of the world! (for such wouldst thou be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was,
In ancient days; and Christian,—in an age,
When men were men, and not ashamed of heaven,
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,
Fain would I re-baptize thee, and confer
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments fatal, and inflam'd,
Point out my path, and dictate to my song;
To thee, the world how fair! how strongly strikes
Ambition! and gay pleasures stronger still!
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt, that lays
Thy virtue dead! be these my triple theme;

4 THE COMPLAINT:

Nor shall thy wit or wisdom, be forgot.

Common the theme; not so the song; if she
My song invokes, Urania, deigns to smile.
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once,
Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes;
Scenes, where these sparks of night, these stars, shall
shine

Unnumber'd suns (for all things, as they are,
The blest behold;) and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's astonisht sight;
A blaze,—the least illustrious object there.

Lorenzo! since eternal is at hand,
To swallow time's ambitions; as the vast
Leviathan, the bubbles vain, that ride
High on the foaming billow; what avail
High titles, high descent, attainments high,
If unattain'd our highest? O Lorenzo!
What lofty thoughts, these elements above,
What towering hopes, what fallies from the sun,
What grand surveys of destiny divine,
And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,
Should roll in bosoms, where a spirit burns,
Bound for eternity! in bosoms read
By him, who foibles in archangels sees!
On human hearts he bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in heaven's register enrolls,
The rise, and progress, of each option there;
Sacred to doomsday! that the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine?
This world! and this, unrival'd by the skies!
A world, where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,
Three demons that divide its realms between them,
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball;
Till, with the giddy circle, sick, and tir'd,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above
That glorious promise angels were esteem'd
Too mean to bring: a promise, their ador'd
Descended to communicate, and press,
By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom wooes,
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;
A pillow, which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
Intoxicates, but not composes; fills
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest;
What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy!
How frail, men, things! how momentary, both!
Fantastic chace, of shadows hunting shades!
The gay, the busy, equal, tho' unlike;
Equal in wisdom, differently wise!
Thro' flowery meadows, and thro' dreary wastes,
One bustling, and one dancing into death.
There's not a day, but, to the man of thought,
Betrays some secret, that throws new reproach
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.
The scenes of bus'ness tell us—'what are men;'

THE COMPLAINT:

The scenes of pleasure—‘ what is all beside :’
 There, others we despise, and here, ourselves.
 Amid disgust eternal, dwells delight ?
 ’Tis approbation strikes the string of joy.

What wondrous prize has kindled this career,
 Stuns with the din, and choaks us with the dust,
 On life’s gay stage, one inch above the grave ?
 The proud run up and down in quest of eyes;
 The sensual, in pursuit of something worse :
 The grave, of gold ; the politic, of power ;
 And all, of other butterflies, as vain !
 As eddies draw things frivolous, and light,
 How is man’s heart by vanity drawn in ;
 On the swift circle of returning toys,
 Whirl’d, straw-like, round and round, and then in
 gulph’d,

Where gay delusion darkens to despair !

‘ This is a beaten track.’—Is this a track
 Should not be beaten ? never beat enough,
 Till enough learnt the truths it would inspire.
 Shall truth be silent, because folly frowns ?
 Turn the world’s history ; what find we there,
 But fortune’s sports, or nature’s cruel claims,
 Or woman’s artifice, or man’s revenge,
 And endless inhumanities on man ?
 Fame’s trumpet seldom sounds, but, like the knell,
 It brings bad tidings : how it hourly blows
 Man’s misadventures round the list’ning world !
 Man is the tale of narrative old Time ;
 Sad tale ; which high as Paradise begins ;

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

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As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The days, his daughters, as they spin our hours
On fortune's wheel, where accident unthought
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,
With, now-and-then, a wretched farce between;
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us;
Not one, but puts some cheat on all mankind:
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes; and promise much
Of amiable; but hold him not o'erwise,
Who dares to trust them; and laugh round the year,
At still-confiding, still-confounded, man.
Confiding, tho' confounded; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never-seen.
Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies;
Nor owns itself a cheat, till it expires.
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night;
Night darker, than what, now, involves the pole.

O THOU, who dost permit these ills to fall,
For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn!
O THOU, whose hands this goodly fabric fram'd,
Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know!
What is this sublunary world? a vapour;
A vapour all it holds; itself, a vapour,
From the damp bed of chaos, by thy beam

8 THE COMPLAINT:

Exhal'd, ordain'd to swim its destin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt, and disappear.
Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom;
As mortal, tho' less transient, than her sons;
Yet they doat on her, as the world and they
Were both eternal, solid; THOU, a dream.

They doat, on what? immortal views apart,
A region of outides! a land of shadows!
A fruitful field of flowery promises!
A wilderness of joys! perplex'd with doubts,
And sharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, spread
With bold adventurers, their all on board;
No second hope, if here their fortune frowns;
Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,
Of ensigns various; all alike in this,
All restless, anxious; tost with hopes, and fears,
In calmest skies; obnoxious all to storm!
And stormy the most general blast of life:
All bound for happiness; yet few provide
The chart of knowledge, pointing where it lies;
Or virtue's helm, to shape the course design'd:
All, more or less, capricious fate lament,
Now lifted by the tide, and now resorb'd,
And farther from their wishes, than before:
All, more or less, against each other dash,
To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion driven,
And suffering more from folly, than from fate.

Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
Of dangers, at eternal war with man!
Death's capital, where most he domineers,

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NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

With all his chosen terrors frowning round,
(Tho' lately feasted high * at Albion's cost)
Wide-opening, and loud-roaring still for more!
Too faithful mirror! how dost thou reflect
The melancholy face of human life!
The strong resemblance tempts me farther still:
And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck
By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,
Which nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope,
When young, with sanguine cheer, and streamers gay,
We cut our cable, launch into the world,
And fondly dream each wind and star our friend;
All, in some darling enterprise embarkt:
But where is he can fathom its event?
Amid a multitude of artless hands,
Ruin's sure perquisite! her lawful prize!
Some steer aright; but the black blast blows hard,
And puffs them wide of hope: with hearts of proof,
Full against wind and tide, some win their way;
And when strong effort has deserv'd the port,
And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won! 'tis lost!
Tho' strong their oar, still stronger is their fate:
They strike; and, while they triumph, they expire.
In stress of weather, most; some sink outright;
O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
Others a short memorial leave behind,

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulph'd;
 It floats a moment, and is seen no more:
 One Caesar lives; a thousand are forgot.
 How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
 (Darlings of providence! fond fate's elect!)
 With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,
 With all their wishes freighted! yet even these,
 Freight with all their wishes, soon complain;
 Free from misfortunes, not from nature free,
 They still are men; and when is man secure?
 As fatal time, as storm! the rush of years
 Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes
 In ruin end: and now, their proud success
 But plants new terrors on the victor's brow:
 What pain to quit the world, just made their own,
 Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high!
 Too low they build, who build beneath the stars.

Woe then apart (if woe apart can be
 From mortal man,) and fortune at our nod,
 The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and august!
 What are they?—the most happy (strange to say!)
 Convince me most of human misery:
 What are they? smiling wretches of to-morrow!
 More wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be;
 Their treach'rous blessings, at the day of need,
 Like other faithless friends, unmask, and sting:
 Then, what provoking indigence in wealth!
 What aggravated impotence in power!
 High titles, then, what insult of their pain!
 If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,

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Immortal hope! defies not the rude storm,
Takes comfort from the foaming billows rage,
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires?

But here (thou say'st) the miseries of life
Are huddled in a group. A more distinct
Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.
Look on life's stages: they speak plainer still;
The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.

Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold
The best that can befall the best on earth;
The boy has virtue by his mother's side:
Yes, on Elorelo look: a father's heart
Is tender, tho' the man's is made of stone;
The truth, thro' such a medium seen, may make
Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

Elorelo lately cast on this rude coast
A helpless infant; now a heedless child;
To poor Clarissa's throes, thy care succeeds;
Care full of love, and yet severe as hate!
O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns!
Needful austerities his will restrain;
As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.
As yet, his reason cannot go alone;
But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.
His little heart is often terrify'd;
The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale;
His pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye;
His harmless eye! and drowns an angel there.
Ah! what avails his innocence? the task

Injoin'd must discipline his early powers ;
 He learns to sigh, ere he has known to sin ;
 Guiltless, and sad ! a wretch before the fall !
 How cruel this ! more cruel to forbear.
 Our nature such, with necessary pains,
 We purchase prospects of precarious peace :
 Tho' not a father, this might steal a sigh.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright (if not,
 'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still ;)
 Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
 He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world ;
 The world is taken, after ten years toil,
 Like ancient Troy ; and all its joys his own.
 Alas ! the world's a tutor more severe ;
 Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains ;
 Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,
 Or books (fair virtue's advocatès !) inspir'd.

For who receives him into public life ?
 Men of the world, the terrae-filial breed,
 Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
 (Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)
 And, in their hospitable arms, enclose :
 Men, who think nought so strong of the romance,
 So rank knight-errant, as a real friend :
 Men, that act up to reason's golden rule,
 All weakness of affection quite subdu'd :
 Men, that would blush at being thought sincere,
 And feign, for glory, the few faults they want ;
 That love a lie, where truth would pay as well ;
 As if, to them, vice shone her own reward.

Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?
Such, for Florello's sake, 'twill now appear:
See, the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falshood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace;
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off;
All their keen purpose, in politeness, sheath'd;
His friends eternal—during interest;
His foes implacable—when worth their while;
At war with every welfare, but their own;
As wise as Lucifer; and half as good;
And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain—
Naked, through these (so common fate ordains)
Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
Stung out of all, most amiable in life,
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd;
Affection, as his species, wide diffus'd;
Noble presumptions to mankind's renown;
Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
Will cost him many a sigh; till time, and pains,
From the slow mistress of this school, experience,
And her assistant, pausing, pale, distrust,
Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
Thro' serpentine obliquities of life,
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
And happy! if the clue shall come so cheap;
For, while we learn to fence with public guilt,
Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
If less than heavenly virtue is our guard.

Thus, a strange kind of curst necessity
 Brings down the sterling temper of his soul,
 By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
 Below call'd wisdom; sinks him into safety;
 And brands him into credit with the world;
 Where specious titles dignify disgrace,
 And nature's injuries are arts of life;
 Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes;
 And heavenly talents make infernal hearts;
 That unfurmountable extreme of guilt!

Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,
 Forgot, that genius need not go to school;
 Forgot, that man, without a tutor wise,
 His plan had practis'd, long before 'twas writ.
 The world's all title-page, there's no contents;
 The world's all face; the man who shews his heart
 Is whooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.
 A man I knew, who liv'd upon a smile;
 And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair;
 While rankest venom foam'd through every vein.
 Lorenzo! what I tell thee, take not ill!
 Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive;
 And, dying, curs'd the friend on whom he liv'd.
 To such proficients thou art half a saint.
 In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)
 How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
 Studious their nests to feather in a trice,
 With all the necromantics of their art,
 Playing the game of faces on each other,
 Making court sweet-meats of their latent gall,

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In spoilish hope, to steal each other's trust;
 Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd;
 And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!
 Their parts we doubt not; but be that their shame;
 Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
 Stoop to mean wiles, that would disgrace a fool?
 And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?
 For who can thank the man, he cannot see?

Why so much cover? it defeats itself.

Ye, that know all things! know ye not, men's hearts
 Are therefore known, because they are conceal'd?
 For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell.
 I give him joy, that's aukward at a lie;
 Whose feeble nature truth keeps still in awe;
 His incapacity is his renown.

'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise;
 It shews our spirit, or it proves our strength.
 Thou say'st, 'tis needful: is it therefore right?
 Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace,
 To strain at an excuse: and wouldst thou then
 Escape that cruel need? thou may'st, with ease;
 Think no post needful that demands a knave.
 When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
 So P—— thought: think better, if you can.

But this, how rare! the public path of life
 Is dirty:—yet, allow that dirt its due,
 It makes the noble mind more noble still:
 The world's no neuter; it will wound, or save;
 Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
 You say; the world, well-known, will make a man:

The world, well-known, will give our hearts to heaven
Or make us demons, long before we die.

To shew how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,
Take either part, sure ills attend the choice;
Sure, though not equal, detriment ensues.
Not virtue's self is deify'd on earth;
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes;
Foes, that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.
True; friends to virtue, last, and least, complain;
But if they sigh, can others hope to smile?
If wisdom has her miseries to mourn,
How can poor folly lead a happy life?
And if both suffer, what has earth to boast,
Where he most happy, who the least laments?
Where much, much patience, the most envy'd state,
And some forgiveness, needs the best of friends?
For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
Of neither shall he find the shadow here.
The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies;
' Thus far thy song is right; and all must own,
' Virtue has her peculiar set of pains—
' And joys peculiar who to vice denies?
' If vice it is, with nature to comply:
' If pride, and sense, are so predominant,
' To check, not overcome, them, makes a saint,
' Can nature in a plainer voice proclaim
' Pleasure, and glory, the chief good of man?
Can pride, and sensuality, rejoice?

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From purity of thought, all pleasure springs ;
 And, from an humble spirit, all our peace.
 Ambition, pleasure ! let us talk of these :
 Of these, the Porch, and Academy, talk'd ;
 Of these, each following age had much to say ;
 Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.
 Who talks of these, to mankind all at once
 He talks ; for where the saint from either free ?
 Are these thy refuge ?—no ; these rush upon thee ;
 Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, devour :
 I'll try, if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
 Prometheus ! from this barren ball of earth ;
 If reason can unchain thee, thou art free.

And, first, thy Caucasus, ambition calls ;
 Mountain of torments ! eminence of woes !
 Of courted woes ! and courted through mistake !
 'Tis not ambition charms thee ; 'tis a cheat
 Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.
 Do'st grasp at greatness ? First, know what it is :
 Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies ?
 Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
 By fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng,
 In glory lodg'd : 'tis lodg'd in the reverse ;
 In that which joins, in that which equals, all,
 The monarch, and his slave ;—' A deathless soul,
 ' Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
 ' A Father God, and brothers in the skies ;'
 Elder, indeed, in time ; but less remote
 In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man ;
 Why greater what can fall, than what can rise ?

If still delirious, now, Lorenzo? go;
 And with thy full-blown brothers of the world,
 Throw scorn around thee? cast it on thy slaves;
 Thy slaves, and equals: how scorn cast on them
 Rebounds on thee! if man is mean, as man,
 Art thou a god? If fortune make him so,
 Beware the consequence: a maxim that,
 Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind;
 Where, in the drapery, the man is lost;
 Externals fluttering, and the soul forgot.
 Thy greatest glory, when dispos'd to boast,
 Boast that aloud, in which thy servants share.

We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy:
 Judge we, in their caparisons, of men?
 It nought avails thee, where, but what, thou art;
 All the distinctions of this little life
 Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man. [creep
 When, through death's streights, earth's subtle serpents
 Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
 As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
 They leave their party-colour'd robe behind;
 All that now glitters, while they rear aloft
 Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.
 Of fortune's fucus strip them, yet alive;
 Strip them of body, too; nay, closer still;
 Away with all, but moral, in their minds;
 And let, what then remains, impose their name,
 Pronounce them weak, or worthy; great, or mean.
 How mean that snuff of glory fortune lights,
 And death puts out! Dost thou demand a test,

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A test, at once, infallible, and short,
 Of real greatness? that man greatly lives,
 Whate'er his fate, or fame, who greatly dies;
 High-flush'd with hope, where heroes shall despair.
 If this a true criterion, many courts,
 Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

The Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys
 Nought greater, than an honest, humble heart;
 An humble heart, his residence! pronounc'd
 His second seat; and rival to the skies.
 The private path, the secret acts of men,
 If noble, far the noblest of our lives!
 How far above Lorenzo's glory fits
 The illustrious master of a name unknown;
 Whose worth unrivall'd, and unwitness'd, loves
 Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men;
 And peace, beyond the world's conception, smiles!
 As thou! (now dark,) before we part, shalt see.

But thy great soul this skulking glory scorns.
 Lorenzo's sick, but when Lorenzo's seen;
 And, when he shrugs at public business, lies.
 Deny'd the public eye, the public voice,
 As if he liv'd on others breath, he dies.
 Vain would he make the world his pedestal;
 Mankind the gazers, the sole figure, he.
 Knows he, that mankind praise against their will,
 And mix as much detraction as they can?
 Knows he, that faithless fame her whisper has,
 As well as trumpet? that his vanity
 Is so much tickled from not hearing all?

Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praise,
 Or, from an itch more sordid, when he shines,
 Taking his country by five-hundred ears,
 Senates at once admire him, and despise,
 With modest laughter lining loud applause,
 Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame?
 His fame, which (like the mighty Caesar,) crown'd
 With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,
 By seeming friends, that honour, and destroy.
 We rise in glory, as we sink in pride:
 Where boasting ends, there dignity begins:
 And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake,
 The blind Lorenzo's proud!—of being proud;
 And dreams himself ascending in his fall.

An eminence, though fancy'd, turns the brain;
 All vice wants hellebore; but of all vice,
 Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl;
 Because, all other vice unlike, it flies,
 In fact, the point, in fancy most pursu'd.
 Who court applause, oblige the world in this;
 They gratify man's passion to refuse.
 Superior honour, when assum'd, is lost;
 Even good men turn banditti, and rejoice,
 Like Kouli Khan, in plunder of the proud.

Though somewhat disconcerted, steady still
 To the world's cause, with half a face of joy,
 Lorenzo cries—'Be, then, ambition cast;
 'Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,
 'Gay pleasure! proud ambition is her slave;
 'For her, he soars at great, and hazards ill;

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‘ For her, he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes;

‘ And paves his way, with crowns, to reach her smile:

‘ Who can resist her charms?’—Or, should? Lorenzo!

What mortal shall resist, where angels yield?

Pleasure’s the mistress of ethereal powers;

? For her contend the rival gods above;

h’d Pleasure’s the mistress of the world below;

And well it is for man, that pleasure charms;

How would all stagnate, but for pleasure’s ray!

How would the frozen stream of action cease!

What is the pulse of this so busy world?

The love of pleasure: that, through every vein,

Throws motion, warmth; and shuts out death from life.

Though various are the tempers of mankind,

in; Pleasure’s gay family holds all in chains:

Some most affect the black; and some, the fair;

Some honest pleasure court; and some, obscene.

Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng

Of passions, that can err in human hearts;

Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.

Think you there’s but one whoredom! whoredom, all,

But when our reason licenses delight.

Dost doubt, Lorenzo? thou shalt doubt no more.

Thy father chides thy gallantries; yet hugs

An ugly, common harlot, in the dark;

A rank adulterer with others gold;

And that hag, vengeance, in a corner, charms.

Hatred her brothel has, as well as love,

Where horrid Epicures debauch in blood.

Whate’er the motive, pleasure is the mark:

22 THE COMPLAINT:

For her, the black assassin draws his sword;
 For her, dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,
 To which no single sacrifice may fall;
 For her, the saint abstains; the miser starves;
 The Stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorn'd;
 For her, affliction's daughters grief indulge,
 And find, or hope, a luxury in tears;
 For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy;
 And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death.
 Thus universal her despotic power.

And as her empire wide, her praise is just,
 Patron of pleasure! doater on delight!
 I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;
 Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song,
 Pleasure is nought but virtue's gayer name;
 I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low;
 Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower;
 And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence;
 If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name.
 How knits austerity her cloudy brow,
 And blames, as bold, and hazardous, the praise
 Of pleasure, to mankind, unprais'd, too dear!
 Ye modern Stoics! hear my soft reply;
 Their senses men will trust: we can't impose;
 Or, if we could, is imposition right?
 Own honey sweet; but, owning, add this sting;
 'When mixt with poison, it is deadly too.'
 Truth never was indebted to a lie.
 Is nought but virtue to be prais'd, as good?

Why then is health preferr'd before disease?
 What nature loves is good, without our leave.
 And where no future drawback cries, 'Beware;
 Pleasure, though not from virtue, should prevail.
 'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to heaven;
 How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
 The love of pleasure is man's eldest-born,
 Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;
 Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave
 Was meant to minister, and not to mar,
 Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.
 Lorenzo! thou her majesty's renown'd,
 Though uncoif'd, counsel, learned in the world!
 Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain
 May'st look on me. Yet, my Demosthenes!
 Canst thou plead pleasure's cause as well as I?
 Know'st thou her nature, purpose, parentage?
 Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;
 And know thyself; and know thyself to be
 (Strange truth!) the most abstemious man alive.
 Tell not Calista; she will laugh thee dead;
 Or send thee to her hermitage with L——
 Absurd presumption! thou, who never knew'st
 A serious thought! shalt thou dare dream of joy?
 No man e'er found a happy life by chance;
 Or yawn'd it into being, with a wish;
 Or, with the snout of grov'ling appetite,
 E'er smelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
 An art it is, and must be learn'd; and learnt
 With unremitting effort, or be lost;

24 THE COMPLAINT:

And leaves us perfect blockheads, in our blifs.
The clouds may drop down titles, and estates;
Wealth may seek us; but wisdom must be fought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else
We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain. [fe

First, pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur
Brought forth by wisdom, nurs'd by discipline,
By patience taught, by perseverance crown'd,
She rears her head majestic; round her throne,
Erected in the bosom of the just,
Each virtue, list'd, forms her manly guard.
For what are virtues? (formidable name!)
What, but the fountain, or defence, of joy?
Why, then, commanded? need mankind command
At once to merit, and to make, their blifs?—
Great legislator! scarce so great, as kind!
If men are rational, and love delight,
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice;
In the transgression lies the penalty;
And they the most indulge, who most obey.

Of pleasure, next, the final cause explore;
Its mighty purpose, its important end.
Not to turn human brutal, but to build
Divine on human, pleasure came from heaven.
In aid to reason was the goddess sent;
To call up all its strength by such a charm.
Pleasure, first, succours virtue; in return,
Virtue gives pleasure an eternal reign.
What, but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,
Supports life natural, civil, and divine?

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'Tis from the pleasure of repast, we live;
'Tis from the pleasure of applause, we please;
t; 'Tis from the pleasure of belief, we pray;
(All prayer would cease, if unbeliev'd the prize :)
[fe It serves ourselves, our species, and our God;
des And to serve more, is past the sphere of man.
Glide, then, for ever, pleasure's sacred stream!
Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
And fosters every growth of happy life;
Makes a new Eden where it flows;—but such
As must be lost, Lorenzo! by thy fall.
' What mean I by thy fall?'—Thou'lt shortly see,
While pleasure's nature is at large display'd;
and Already sung her origin, and ends.
Those glorious ends, by kind, or by degree,
When pleasure violates, 'tis then a vice,
And vengeance too; it hastens into pain.
From due refreshment, life, health, reason, joy;
From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death;
Heaven's justice this proclaims, and that her love.
What greater evil can I wish my foe,
Than his full draught of pleasure, from a cask
Unbroach'd by just authority, ungaug'd
By temperance, by reason unrefin'd?
A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
Heaven, others, and ourselves! uninjur'd these,
Drink deep; the deeper, then, the more divine;
Angels are angels from indulgence there;
th, 'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god.
Dost think thyself a god from other joys?

A victim rather! shortly sure to bleed. [fail
 The wrong must mourn: can heaven's appointment
 Can man outwit omnipotence? strike out
 A self-wrought happiness un-meant by him
 Who made us, and the world we would enjoy?
 Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence
 Its dissonance, or harmony, shall rise.
 Heaven bid the soul this mortal frame inspire;
 Bid virtue's ray divine inspire the soul
 With unprecious flows of vital joy;
 And, without breathing, man as well might hope
 For life, as, without piety, for peace.

‘Is virtue, then, and piety the same?’—
 No; piety is more; 'tis virtue's source;
 Mother of every worth, as that of joy.
 Men of the world this doctrine ill digest;
 They smile at piety; yet boast aloud
 Good-will to men; nor know they strive to part
 What nature joins; and thus confute themselves.
 With piety begins all good on earth;
 'Tis the first-born of rationality.
 Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies;
 Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good;
 A feign'd affection bounds her utmost power.
 Some we can't love, but for the Almighty's sake;
 A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man;
 Some sinister intent taints all he does;
 And, in his kindest actions, he's unkind.
 On piety, humanity is built;
 And, on humanity, much happiness;

And yet still more on piety itself.

A soul in commerce with her God, is heaven;

Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life;

The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.

A Deity believ'd, is joy begun;

A Deity ador'd, is joy advanc'd;

A Deity belov'd, is joy matur'd.

Each branch of piety delight inspires;

Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,

O'er death's dark gulph, and all its horror hides;

Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy.

That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still;

Prayer ardent opens heaven, lets down a stream

Of glory on the consecrated hour

Of man, in audience with the Deity.

Who worships the great God, that instant joins

The first in heaven, and sets his foot on hell.

Lorenzo! when wast thou at church before?

Thou think'st the service long: but is it just?

Tho' just, unwelcome: thou hadst rather tread

Unhallow'd ground; the muse, to win thine ear,

Must take an air less solemn. She complies.

Good conscience! at the sound the world retires;

Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles;

Yet has she her seraglio full of charms;

And such as age shall heighten, not impair.

Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercast?

Amid her fair ones, thou the fairest chuse,

To chase thy gloom.—'Go, fix some weighty truth;

'Chain down some passion; do some generous good;

- Teach ignorance to see, or grief to smile;
- Correct thy friend; befriend thy greatest foe;
- Or, with warm heart, and confidence divine,
- Spring up, and lay strong hold on him who mad
‘thee.’—

Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow;
Tho' wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,
Loud mirth, mad laughter? wretched comforters!
Physicians! more than half of thy disease.
Laughter, tho' never censur'd yet as sin,
(Pardon a thought that only seems severe)
Is half-immoral: is it much indulg'd?
By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
It shews a scorner, or it makes a fool;
And sins, as hurting others, as ourselves.
'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw,
That tickles little minds to mirth effuse;
Of grief approaching, the portentuous sign!
The house of laughter makes a house of woe.
A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;
A man dejected is a sight as mean.
What cause for triumph, where such ills abound?
What for dejection, where presides a Power,
Who call'd us into being to be blest?
So grieve, as conscious, grief may rise to joy;
So joy, as conscious, joy to grief may fall.
Most true, a wise man never will be sad;
But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,
A shallow stream of happiness betray;

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Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.

Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expence,)

This counsel strange should I presume to give—

mad ' Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.'

There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace;

Ah! do not prize them less, because inspir'd,

As thou, and thine, are apt and proud to do.

If not inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood,

s! Time's treasure! and the wonder of the wise!

Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake;

Alas! should men mistake thee for a fool;—

What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,

Tho' tender of thy fame, could interpose?

Believe me, sense here acts a double part,

And the true critic is a Christian too.

But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.—

True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first;

They, first, themselves offend, who greatly please;

And travel only gives us sound repose.

Heaven sells all pleasure; effort is the price;

The joys of conquest are the joys of man;

And glory the victorious laurel spreads

O'er pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream.

There is a time, when toil must be prefer'd,

O' joy, by mis-tim'd fondness, is undone.

A man of pleasure is a man of pains.

Thou wilt not take the trouble to be blest.

False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought;

From thoughts full bent, and energy, the true;

And that demands a mind in equal poize,

30 THE COMPLAINT:

Remote from gloomy grief, and glaring joy.

Much joy not only speaks small happiness,

But happiness that shortly must expire.

Can joy, unbottomb'd in reflection, stand?

And, in a tempest, can reflection live?

Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour?

Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd?

Or ope the door to honest poverty?

Or talk with threatening death, and not turn pale?

In such a world, and such a nature, these

Are needful fundamentals of delight:

These fundamentals give delight indeed;

Delight, pure, delicate, and durable;

Delight, unshaken, masculine, divine;

A constant, and a sound, but serious joy.

Is joy the daughter of severity?

It is:—but far my doctrine from severe.

'Rejoice for ever:' it becomes a man;

Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.

'Rejoice for ever,' nature cries, 'Rejoice;'

And drinks to man, in her nectareous cup,

Mixt up of delicates for every sense;

To the great Founder of the bounteous feast,

Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise;

And he that will not pledge her, is a churl.

Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,

Is the whole science of felicity:

Yet sparing pledge: her bowl is not the best

Mankind can boast—'A rational repast;

'Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,

' A military discipline of thought,
' To foil temptation in the doubtful field ;
' And ever-waking ardor for the right.'
'Tis these, first, give, then guard, a chearful heart.
Nought that is right, think little ; well aware,
What reason bids, God bids ; by his command
How aggrandiz'd, the smallest thing we do !
Thus, nothing is insipid to the wise ;
To thee, insipid all, but what is mad ;
Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.
 ' Mad ! (thou reply'st, with indignation fir'd)
' Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
' I follow nature.'—Follow nature still,
But look it be thine own : is conscience, then,
No part of nature ? is she not supreme ?
Thou regicide ! O raise her from the dead !
Then, follow nature ; and resemble God.
When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursu'd,
Man's nature is unnaturally pleas'd :
And what's unnatural, is painful too
At intervals, and must disgust even thee !
The fact thou know'st ; but not, perhaps, the cause.
Virtue's foundations with the worlds were laid ;
Heaven mixt her with our make, and twisted close
Her sacred interests with the strings of life.
Who breaks her awful mandate, shocks himself,
His better self : and is it greater pain,
Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine ?
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.
 If one must suffer, which should least be spar'd ?

32 THE COMPLAINT:

The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense :
 Ask, then, the gout, what torment is in guilt ;
 The joys of sense to mental joys are mean :
 Sense on the present only feeds ; the soul
 On past, and future, forages for joy.
 'Tis hers, by retrospect, thro' time to range ;
 And forward time's great sequel to survey.
 Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,
 Axes might rust, and racks, and gibbets, fall :
 Guard, then, thy mind, and leave the rest to fate.

Lorenzo ! wilt thou never be a man ?

The man is dead, who for the body lives,
 Lur'd, by the beating of his pulse, to list
 With every lust, that wars against his peace ;
 And sets him quite at variance with himself.
 Thyself, first, know ; then love : a self there is
 Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.
 A self there is, as fond of every vice,
 While every virtue wounds it to the heart ;
 Humility degrades it, justice robs,
 Blest bounty beggars it, fair truth betrays,
 And godlike magnanimity destroys.
 This self, when rival to the former, scorn ;
 When not in competition, kindly treat,
 Defend it, feed it :—but when virtue bids,
 Toss it, or to the fowls, or to the flames.
 And why ? 'tis love of pleasure bids thee bleed ;
 Comply, or own self-love extinct, or blind.

For what is vice ? self-love in a mistake :
 A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.

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And virtue, what? 'tis self-love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread Power,
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.
Other self-love is but disguis'd self-hate;
More mortal than the malice of our foes:
A self-hate, now, scarce felt; then felt full-fore,
When being, curst; extinction, loud-implor'd;
And every thing preferr'd to what we are.

Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice;
And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.
How is his want of happiness betray'd,
By disaffection to the present hour!
Imagination wanders far a-field:
The future pleases: why? the present pains—
'But that's a secret.'—Yes, which all men know;
And know from thee, discover'd unawares.
Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause;
What is it?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,
From instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
Which her physician, reason, will not cure.
A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while
It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies!
The weak have remedies, the wise have joys.
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise?
Consistent wisdom ever wills the same;
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.

Sick of herself, is folly's character ;
As wisdom's is, a modest self-applause.
A change of evils is thy good supreme ;
Nor, but in motion, canst thou find thy rest.
Man's greatest strength is shewn in standing still.
The first sure symptom of a mind in health,
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
False pleasure from abroad her joys imports ;
Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the true.
The true is fixt, and solid as a rock ;
Slippery the false, and tossing, as the wave.
This, a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain ;
That, like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy,
Home-contemplation her supreme delight ;
She dreads an interruption from without,
Smit with her own condition ; and the more
Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

No man is happy, till he thinks, on earth
There breathes not a more happy than himself :
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all ;
And love o'erflowing makes an angel here,
Such angels all, intitled to repose
On him who governs fate : tho' tempest frowns,
Tho' nature shakes, how soft to lean on heaven !
To lean on him, on whom archangels lean !
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting every beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight ;
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to, heaven :

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Hence, are they studious of sequestred scenes ;
While noise, and dissipation, comfort thee.

Were all men happy, revellings would cease,
That opiate for inquietude within.

Lorenzo ! never man was truly blest,
But it compos'd, and gave him such a cast,
As folly might mistake for want of joy.

A cast, unlike the triumph of the proud ;
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.

O for a joy from thy Philander's spring !

A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
And permanent, as pure ! no turbid stream
Of rapturous exultation, swelling high ;

Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while,
Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.

What does the man, who transient joy prefers ?

What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream ?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight ;

Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.

Joy's a fixt state ; a tenure, not a start.

Bliss there is none, but unprecious bliss :

That is the gem : sell all, and purchase that.

Why go a begging to contingencies,

Not gain'd with ease, nor safely lov'd, if gain'd ?

At good fortuitous, draw back, and pause ;

Suspect it ; what thou canst ensure, enjoy ;

And nought but what thou giv'st thyself, is sure.

Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives,

And makes it as immortal as herself :

To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.

THE COMPLAINT:

Worth, conscious worth! should absolutely reign
 And other joys ask leave for their approach;
 Nor, unexamin'd, ever leave obtain.
 Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys
 Wage war, and perish in intestine broils;
 Not the least promise of internal peace!
 No bosom-comfort! or unborrow'd bliss!
 Thy thoughts are vagabonds: all outward-bound,
 Mid sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure
 If gain'd, dear bought; and better miss'd than gain'd.
 Much pain must expiate, what much pain procur'd
 Fancy, and sense, from an infected shore,
 Thy cargo bring; and pestilence the prize.
 Then, such thy thirst (insatiable thirst!
 By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more!)
 Fancy still cruises, when poor sense is tir'd.

Imagination is the Paphian shop,
 Where feeble happiness, like Vulcan, lame,
 Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,
 And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires,)
 With wanton art, those fatal arrows form,
 Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame
 Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there are
 On angel-wing, descending from above,
 Which these, with art divine, would counterwork,
 And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In this is seen imagination's guilt;
 But who can count her follies? she betrays thee,
 To think in grandeur there is something great.
 For works of curious art, and ancient fame,

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Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd;
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
Hence, what disaster!—tho' the price was paid,
That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,
Whose foot, (ye gods!) tho' cloven, must be kiss'd,
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore;
(Such is the fate of honest Protestants!)
And poor magnificence is starv'd to death.
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—
Be pacify'd; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn;
Pompous expences, and parades august,
And courts; that insalubrious soil to peace.
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye;
True happiness resides in things unseen.
No smiles of fortune ever blest the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob innocence of joys;
That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor:
So tell his Holiness, and be reveng'd.
Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
Our only contest, what deserves the name.
Give pleasure's name to nought, but what has pass'd
The authentic seal of reason (which, like Yorke,
Demurs on what it passes) and defies
The tooth of time; when past, a pleasure still;
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms, our present, joy.
Some joys the future overcast; and some
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.

Some joys endear eternity; some give
 Abhorr'd annihilation dreadful charms.
 Are rival joys contending for thy choice?
 Consult thy whole existence, and be safe;
 That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
 Short is the lesson, tho' my lecture long,
 Be good—and let heaven answer for the rest.

Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant
 In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
 The good man has his clouds that intervene;
 Clouds, that obscure his sublunary day,
 But never conquer: even the best must own,
 Patience, and resignation, are the pillars
 Of human peace on earth. The pillars, these:
 But those of Seth not more remote from thee,
 Till this heroic lesson thou hast learnt;
 To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.
 Fir'd at the prospect of unclouded bliss,
 Heaven in reversion, like the sun, as yet
 Beneath the horizon, cheers us in this world;
 It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
 The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

' This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue:
 ' But can harangues blow back strong nature's stream?
 ' Or stem the tide heaven pushes thro' our veins,
 ' Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
 ' And lays his labour level with the world?'

Themselves men make their comment on mankind
 And think nought is, but what they find at home:
 Thus, weakness to chimera turns the truth.

Nothing romantic has the muse prescrib'd.

* Above, Lorenzo saw the man of earth,
The mortal man; and wretched was the sight.
To balance that, to comfort, and exalt,
Now see the man immortal: him, I mean,
Who lives as such: whose heart, full-bent on heaven,
Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
His lustre more; tho' bright, without a foil:
Observe his awful portrait, and admire;
Nor stop at wonder; imitate, and live.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less than angel can exceed,
A man on earth devoted to the skies;
Like ships in seas, while in, above the world.
With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of sense, and passion's storm;
All the black cares, and tumults, of this life,
Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred, and the slave,
A mingled mob! a wandering herd! he sees,
Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!
His full reverse in all! what higher praise?
What stronger demonstration of the right?
The present all their care; the future, his.
When public welfare calls, or private want,

* In a former night.

They give to fame; his bounty he conceals.
 Their virtues varnish nature; his exalt.
 Mankind's esteem they court; and he, his own.
 Theirs, the wild chase of false felicities;
 His, the compos'd possession of the true.
 Alike throughout is his consistent peace,
 All of one colour, and an even thread;
 While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,
 With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
 A madman's robe; each puff of fortune blows
 The tatters by, and shews their nakedness.

He sees with other eyes than theirs: where they
 Behold a sun, he spies a Deity;
 What makes them only smile, makes him adore.
 Where they see mountains, he but atoms sees;
 An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.
 They things terrestrial worship, as divine;
 His hopes immortal blow them by, as dust,
 That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,
 Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound.
 Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
 He lays aside to find his dignity;
 No dignity they find in aught besides.
 They triumph in externals, (which conceal
 Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse.
 Himself too much he prizes to be proud.
 And nothing thinks so great in man, as man.
 Too dear he holds his interest, to neglect
 Another's welfare, or his right invade;
 Their interest, like a lion, lives on prey.

They kindle at the shadow of a wrong;
Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on heaven,
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe;
Nought, but what wounds his virtue, wounds his peace.
A cover'd heart their character defends;
A cover'd heart denies him half his praise.
With nakedness his innocence agrees;
While their broad foliage testifies their fall.
Their no-joys end, where his full feast begins;
His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss.
To triumph in existence, his alone;
And his alone, triumphantly to think
His true existence is not yet begun.
His glorious course was, yesterday, compleat;
Death, then, was welcome; yet life still is sweet.

But nothing charms Lorenzo, like the firm,
Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise?
They yield to pleasure, tho' they danger brave,
And shew no fortitude, but in the field;
If there they shew it, 'tis for glory shewn;
Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.
A cordial his sustains, that cannot fail;
By pleasure unsubdu'd, unbroke by pain,
He shares in that omnipotence he trusts.
All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls;
And when he falls, writes VICI on his shield.
From magnanimity, all fear above;
From nobler recompence, above applause;
Which owes to man's short out-look all its charms.
Backward to credit what he never felt,

Lorenzo cries,—‘ Where shines this miracle ?
 ‘ From what root rises this immortal man ?’
 A root that grows not in Lorenzo’s ground ;
 The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.

He follows nature (not like * thee,) and shews
 An uninverted system of a man.

His appetite wears reason’s golden chain,
 And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.
 His passion, like an eagle well reclaim’d,
 Is taught to fly at nought, but infinite.
 Patient his hope, un-anxious is his care,
 His caution fearless, and his grief, (if grief
 The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
 And why ?—because affection, more than meet,
 His wisdom leaves not disengag’d from heaven.
 Those secondary goods that smile on earth,
 He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
 They most the world enjoy, who least admire.
 His understanding scapes the common cloud
 Of fumes, arising from a boiling breast.
 His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
 By worldly competitions uninflam’d.
 The mod’rate movements of his soul admit
 Distinct ideas, and matur’d debate,
 An eye impartial, and an even scale;
 Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.
 Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise ;
 On its own dunghill, wiser than the world.

* See page 31, line 13.

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What, then, the world? it must be doubly weak;
Strange truth! as soon would they believe their creed.

Yet thus it is; nor otherwise can be;
So far from aught romantic, what I sing.
Bliss has no being, virtue has no strength,
But from the prospect of immortal life.
Who thinks earth all, or, (what weighs just the same)
Who care no farther, must prize what it yields;
Fond of its fancies; proud of its parades.
Who thinks earth nothing, can't its charms admire;
He can't a foe, tho' most malignant, hate,
Because that hate would prove his greater foe.
'Tis hard for them (yet who so loudly boast
Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friend;
For may not he invade their good supreme,
Where the least jealousy turns love to gall?
All shines to them, that for a season shines.
Each act, each thought, he questions, 'What its weight,
'Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?'—
And what it there appears, he deems it now.
Hence, pure are the recesses of his soul.
The god-like man has nothing to conceal.
His virtue, constitutionally deep,
Has habit's firmness, and affection's flame;
Angels, ally'd, descend to feed the fire;
And death, which others slay, makes him a god.
And now, Lorenzo! bigot of this world!
Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by heaven!
Stand by thy scorn, and be reduc'd to nought:
For what art thou?—Thou boaster! while thy glare,

44 THE COMPLAINT:

Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most;
And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,
By promise, now, and by possession, soon,
(Too soon, too much, it cannot be) his own.

From this thy just annihilation rise,
Lorenzo! rise to something, by reply.
The world, thy client, listens, and expects;
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.
Canst thou be silent? no; for wit is thine;
And wit talks most, when least she has to say,
And reason interrupts not her career.
She'll say—That mists above the mountains rise;
And, with a thousand pleasantries, amuse;
She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,
And fly conviction, in the dust she rais'd.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
'Tis precious, as the vehicle of sense;
But, as its substitute, a dire disease.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare,
Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;
Passion can give it; sometimes wine inspires
The lucky flash; and madness rarely fails.
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs,
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown, 'twere well, was this the worst;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,

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See dullness blund'ring on vivacities,
Shakes her sage head at the calamity,
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.
But wisdom, awful wisdom! which inspects,
Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last;
How rare! in senates, fynods, sought in vain;
Or if there found, 'tis sacred to the few;
While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
Frequent, as fatal, wit: in civil life,
Wit makes an enterpriser; sense, a man.
Wit hates authority; commotion loves,
And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.
In states, 'tis dangerous; in religion, death:
Shall wit turn Christian, when the dull believe?
Sense is our helmet, wit is but the plume;
The plume exposes, 'tis our helmet saves.
Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound;
When cut by wit, it casts a brighter beam;
Yet, wit apart, it is a diamond still.
Wit, widow'd of good sense, is worse than nought;
It hoists more sail to run against a rock.
Thus, a half-Chesterfield is quite a fool;
Whom dull fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.
How ruinous the rock! I warn thee shun,
Where Sirens sit, to sing thee to thy fate!
A joy, in which our reason bears no part,
Is but a sorrow tickling, ere it stings.
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?

Happy! of this bad world who little know!—
 And yet, we much must know her, to be safe.
 To know the world, not love her, is thy point;
 She gives but little, nor that little, long.
 There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse;
 A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
 Our thoughtless agitation's idle child,
 That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,
 Leaving the soul more vapid than before.
 An animal ovation! such as holds
 No commerce with our reason, but subsists
 On juices, thro' the well-ton'd tubes, well-strain'd;
 A nice machine! scarce ever tun'd aright;
 And when it jars—thy Sirens sing no more;
 Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown
 (Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,
 In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair.

Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,
 And startle at destruction? if thou art,
 Accept a buckler, take it to the field;
 (A field of battle is this mortal life!)
 When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart;
 A single sentence proof against the world.
 'Soul, body, fortune! every good pertains
 'To one of these; but prize not all alike;
 'The goods of fortune to thy body's health,
 'Body to soul, and soul submit to God.'
 Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? do this;
 The inverted pyramid can never stand.

Is this truth doubtful? it outshines the sun;

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Nay, the sun shines not, but to shew us this,
The single lesson of mankind on earth.
And yet—yet, what? no news! mankind is mad;
Such mighty numbers list against the right,
(And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, atchieve!)
They talk themselves to something like belief,
That all earth's joys are theirs: as Athens' fool
Grinn'd from the port, on every sail his own.

They grin, but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
Half ignorance, their mirth; and half, a lie;
To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile.
Hard either task! the most abandon'd own,
That others, if abandon'd, are undone:

Then, for themselves, the moment reason wakes,
(And Providence denies it long repose)
O how laborious is their gaiety!

They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen,
Scarce muster patience to support the farce,
And pump sad laughter, till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I say? some cannot sit it out;
On their own daring hands the curtain draw,
And shew us what their joy, by their despair.

The clotted hair! gor'd breast! blaspheming eye!
Its impious fury still alive in death!—

Shut, shut the shocking scene.—But heaven denies
A cover to such guilt; and so should man.

Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade,
The invenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;
The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;
The loathsome rottenness, and soul decays

From raging riot, (flower suicides!)
 And pride in these, more execrable still!—
 How horrid all to thought!—but horrors, these,
 That vouch the truth; and aid my feeble song.

From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be blest:
 Bliss is too great, to lodge within an hour:
 When an immortal being aims at bliss,
 Duration is essential to the name.
 O for a joy from reason! joy from that,
 Which makes man man; and, exercis'd aright,
 Will make him more: a bounteous joy! that gives,
 And promises; that weaves, with art divine,
 The richest prospect into present peace:
 A joy ambitious! joy in common held
 With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:
 A joy high privileg'd from chance, time, death!
 A joy, which death shall double! judgment crown!
 Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,
 Thro' blest eternity's long day; yet still,
 Not more remote from sorrow, than from him,
 Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
 So much of deity on guilty dust.

There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,
 Where not thy presence can improve my bliss!

Affects not this the fages of the world?
 Can nought affect them, but what fools them too!
 Eternity, depending on an hour,
 Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise
 Nor need you blush (tho' sometimes your designs
 May shun the light) at your designs on heaven;

Sole point! where over-bashful is your blame.
 Are you not wise?—You know you are: yet hear
 One truth, amid your numerous schemes, mislaid,
 Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen;
 'Our schemes to plan by this world, or the next,
 'Is the sole difference between wise, and fool.'
 All worthy men will weigh you in this scale;
 What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?
 Is their esteem alone not worth your care?
 Accept my simple scheme of common sense:

Thus, save your fame, and make two worlds your own.

The world replies not;—but the world persists;
 And puts the cause off to the longest day,
 Planning evasions for the day of doom.

So far, at that re-hearing, from redress,
 They then turn witnesses against themselves.
 Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow.
 Hasten, hasten! a man, by nature, is in haste;
 For who shall answer for another hour?

'Tis highly prudent, to make one sure friend;
 And that thou can'st not do, this side the skies.

O ye sons of earth! (nor willing to be more!)
 Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
 Thus, in an age so gay, the muse plain truths
 (Truths, which, at church, you might have had in
 prose)

Has ventur'd into light; well-pleas'd the verse
 Should be forgot, if you the truths retain;
 And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
 For praise she need not fear: I see my fate;

And head-long leap, like Curtius, down the gulph,
 Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
 Must die; and die unwept; O thou minute,
 Devoted page! go forth among thy foes;
 Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
 And die a double death: mankind, incens'd,
 Denies thee long to live: nor shalt thou rest,
 When thou art dead; in Stygian shades arraign'd
 By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne;
 And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the world;
 The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,
 And volunteers, around his banner swarm;
 Prudent, as Prussia, in her zeal for Gaul.

‘Are all, then, fools?’ Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all
 But such as hold this doctrine (new to thee;)
 ‘The mother of true wisdom is the will;
 The noblest intellect, a fool without it.
 World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,
 In arts and sciences, in wars, and peace;
 But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee
 And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
 This is the most indulgence can afford;—
 ‘Thy wisdom all can do, but—make thee wise.’
 Nor think this censure is severe on thee;
 Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

NIGHT the NINTH and LAST.

THE
CONSOLATION.

Containing, among other things,

I. A moral survey of the nocturnal heavens.

II. A Night-Address to the DEITY.

Humbly inscribed to his GRACE

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,

One of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

—Fatis contraria fata rependens. VIRO.

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NIGHT THE NINTH, AND LAST.

As when a traveller, a long day past
 In painful search of what he cannot find,
 At night's approach, content with the next cot,
 There ruminates, a while, his labour lost;
 Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords,
 And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
 Till the due season calls him to repose:
 Thus I, long-travell'd in the ways of men,
 And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,
 Where disappointment smiles at hope's career;
 Warn'd by the languor of life's evening ray,
 At length have hous'd me in an humble shed;
 Where, future wand'ring banish'd from my thought,
 And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,
 I chase the moments with a serious song.
 Long sooths our pains; and age has pains to sooth.
 When age, care, crime, and friends embrac'd at
 heart,
 Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark shade,
 Which hovers o'er me, quench the ethereal fire;
 Hast thou, O Night! indulge one labour more?
 O labour more indulge! then sleep, my strain!
 O, haply, wak'd by Raphael's golden lyre.

Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow, cease
 To bear a part in everlasting lays;
 Though far, far higher set, in aim, I trust,
 Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

Has not the muse asserted pleasures pure,
 Like those above; exploding other joys?
 Weigh what was urg'd, Lorenzo! fairly weigh;
 And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still?
 I think, thou wilt forbear a boast so bold.
 But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
 Thy smile's sincere, not more sincere can be
 Lorenzo's smile, than my compassion for him.
 The sick in body call for aid; the sick
 In mind are covetous of more disease;
 And when at worst, they dream themselves quite well
 To know ourselves diseas'd, is half our cure.
 When nature's blush by custom is wip'd off,
 And conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes,
 Has into manners naturaliz'd our crimes;
 The curse of curses is, our curse to love;
 To triumph in the blackness of our guilt,
 (As Indians glory in the deepest jet;)
 And throw aside our senses with our peace.

But, grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy;
 Grant joy and glory, quite unsully'd, shone;
 Yet, still, it ill deserves Lorenzo's heart.
 No joy, no glory, glitters in thy sight,
 But, through the thin partition of an hour,
 I see its fables wove by destiny;
 And that in sorrow bury'd; this, in shame;

While howling furies ring the doleful knell ;
And conscience, now so soft thou scarce canst hear
Her whisper, echoes her eternal peal.

Where, the prime actors of the last year's scene ;
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume ?
How many sleep, who kept the world awake
With lustre, and with noise ! has death proclaim'd
A truce, and hung his fated lance on high ?
'Tis brandish'd still ; nor shall the present year
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or spread of feeble life a thinner fall.

But needless monuments to wake the thought ;
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality ;
Though in a style more florid, full as plain,
As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.
What are our noblest ornaments, but deaths
Turn'd flatterers of life, in paint, or marble,
The well-stain'd canvass, or the featur'd stone ?
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene.
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

' Profest diversions ! cannot these escape ?'—
Far from it : these present us with a shroud ;
And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave.
As some bold plunderers, for bury'd wealth,
We ransack tombs for pastime ; from the dust
Call up the sleeping hero ; bid him tread
The scene for our amusement : how like gods
We sit ; and, wrapt in immortality,
Shed generous tears on wretches born to die ;
Their fate deploring, to forget our own !

What, all the pomps and triumphs of our lives,
 But legacies in blossom? our lean soil,
 Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities,
 From friends interr'd beneath; a rich manure!
 Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;
 Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
 Our present frailties, or approaching fate?

Lorenzo! such the glories of the world!
 What is the world itself? thy world?—a grave.
 Where is the dust that has not been alive?
 The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors;
 From human mould we reap our daily bread.
 The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
 And is the cieling of her sleeping sons.
 O'er devastation we blind revels keep;
 Whole bury'd towns support the dancer's heel.
 The moist of human frame the sun exhales;
 Winds scatter, through the mighty void, the dry;
 Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
 And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire;
 Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils;
 As nature, wide, our ruins spread; man's death
 Inhabits all things, but the thought of man.

Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires,
 His tomb is mortal; empires die: where, now,
 The Roman? Greek? they stalk, an empty name!
 Yet few regard them in this useful light;
 Though half our learning is their epitaph.
 When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
 That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,

O death! I stretch my view; what visions rise!
What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!
In wither'd laurels glide before my sight!
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd high
With human agitation, roll along
In unsubstantial images of air!
The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,
Whispering faint echoes of the world's applause:
With penitential aspect, as they pass,
All point at earth, and hiss at human pride,
The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

But, O Lorenzo! far the rest above,
Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,
The form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
And shakes my frame. Of one departed world
See the mighty shadow: oozy wreath
And dismal sea-weed crown her; o'er her urn
Reclin'd, she weeps her desolated realms,
And bloated sons; and, weeping, prophecies
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames.
Not, like Cassandra, prophecies in vain;
In vain, to many; not, I trust, to thee.

For, know'st thou not, or art thou loth to know,
The great decree, the counsel of the skies!
Deluge and conflagration, dreadful powers!
Prime ministers of vengeance! chain'd in caves
Distinct, apart the giant furies roar;
Or, such their horrid rage for ruin,
That mutual conflict would they rise, and wage
Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.

But not for this, ordain'd their boundless rage:
 When heaven's inferior instruments of wrath,
 War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak
 To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,
 These are let loose alternate: down they rush,
 Swift and tempestuous, from the eternal throne,
 With irresistible commission arm'd,
 The world, in vain corrected, to destroy,
 And ease creation of the shocking scene.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?
 The fate of nature; as for man, her birth.
 Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,
 And make creation groan with human guilt.
 How must it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
 But not of waters! at the destin'd hour,
 By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
 See, all the formidable sons of fire,
 Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play
 Their various engines; all at once disgorge
 Their blazing magazines; and take, by storm,
 This poor terrestrial citadel of man.

Amazing period! when each mountain-height
 Out-burns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour
 Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd;
 Stars rush; and final ruin fiercely drives
 Her ploughshare o'er creation!—while aloft,
 More than astonishment! if more can be!
 Far other firmament than e'er was seen,
 Than e'er was thought by man! far other stars!
 Stars animate, that govern these of fire;

Far other fun!—a fun, O how unlike
The babe at Bethle'm! how unlike the man
That groan'd on Calvary!—yet he it is;
That man of sorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp!
In grandeur terrible, all heaven descends!
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.
And now, all dross remov'd, heaven's own pure day,
All on the confines of our ether, flames.
While, (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!
All bursting, belches forth her blazing seas,
And storms sulphureous; her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.
Lorenzo! welcome to this scene; the last
Nature's course; the first in wisdom's thought.
His strikes, if aught can strike thee; this awakes
The most supine; this snatches man from death.
Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo, then, and follow me,
Here truth, the most momentous man can hear,
And calls my soul, and ardor wings her flight.
And my inspiration in my theme;
The grandeur of my subject is my muse.
At midnight, when mankind is wrapt in peace,
And worldly fancy feeds on golden dreams;
Give more dread to man's most dreadful hour,
Midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst
From tenfold darkness; sudden, as the spark
From smitten steel; from nit'rous grain, the blaze.

60 THE CONSOLATION:

Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more!
The day is broke, which never more shall close!
Above, around, beneath, amazement all!
Terror and glory join'd in their extremes!
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!
All nature struggling in the pangs of death!
Dost thou not hear her? dost thou not deplore
Her strong convulsions, and her final groan?
Where are we now? ah me! the ground is gone,
On which we stood, Lorenzo! while thou may'st,
Provide more firm support, or sink for ever!
Where? how? from whence? vain hope! it is too late
Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly,
When consternation turns the good man pale?

Great day! for which all other days were made
For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Descended on poor earth-created man!
Great day of dread, decision, and despair!
At thought of thee each sublunary wish
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world;
And catches at each reed of hope in heaven.
At thought of thee!—and art thou absent then?
Lorenzo! no; 'tis here;—it is begun;—
Already is begun the grand assize,
In thee, in all: deputed conscience scales
The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom;
Forestalls; and, by forestalling, proves it sure.
Why on himself should man void judgment pass?
Is idle nature laughing at her sons?

Who conscience sent, her sentence will support,
And GOD above assert that God in man.
Thrice happy they! that enter now the court
Heaven opens in their bosoms: but, how rare,
Oh me! that magnanimity, how rare!
That hero, like the man who stands himself
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone;
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings,
Resolv'd to silence future murmurs there?
The coward flies; and, flying, is undone.
Art thou a coward? no :) the coward flies;
He thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, but fears to know;
Asks, 'What is truth?' with Pilate; and retires;
Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng;
Asylum sad! from reason, hope, and heaven!
Shall all, but man, look out with ardent eye,
On that great day, which was ordain'd for man?
That day of consummation! mark supreme
(Men are wise) of human thought! nor least,
In the sight of angels, or their KING!
Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,
Order o'er order rising, blaze o'er blaze,
As in a theatre, surround this scene,
Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.
Angels look out for thee; for thee, their LORD,
To vindicate his glory; and for thee,
Creation universal calls aloud,
To dis-involve the moral world, and give
To nature's renovation brighter charms.
Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,

Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought!

I think of nothing else; I see! I feel it!

All nature, like an earthquake, trembling round!

All deities, like summer's swarms, on wing!

All basking in the full meridian blaze!

I see the Judge inthron'd! the flaming guard!

The volume open'd! open'd every heart!

A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought!

No patron! intercessor none! now past

The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!

For guilt no plea! to pain, no pause! no bound!

Inexorable, all! and all, extreme!

Nor man alone; the foe of God and man,

From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,

And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd;

Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.

All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace:

Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll

His baleful eyes! he curses whom he dreads;

And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'Tis present to my thought!—and yet where is

Angels can't tell me; angels cannot guess

The period; from created beings lock'd

In darkness. But the process, and the place,

Are less obscure; for these may man inquire.

Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears!

Great key of hearts! great finisher of fates!

Great end! and great beginning! say, where art thou

Art thou in time, or in eternity?

Nor in eternity, nor time, I find thee.

these, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
 Monarchs of all-elaps'd, or unarriv'd!)
 is in debate, how best their powers ally'd,
 may swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath,
 of HIM, whom both their monarchies obey.
 Time, this vast fabric for him built (and doom'd
 with him to fall) now bursting o'er his head;
 his lamp, the sun, extinguish'd; from beneath
 the frown of hideous darkness, calls his sons
 from their long slumber; from earth's heaving womb,
 to second birth; contemporary throng!
 rous'd at one call, upstarting from one bed,
 rest in one croud, appall'd with one amaze,
 he turns them o'er, eternity! to thee.
 then (as a king depos'd disdains to live)
 he falls on his own scythe; nor falls alone;
 his greatest foe falls with him; time, and he
 who murder'd all time's offspring, death, expire.
 TIME was! ETERNITY now reigns alone!
 awful eternity! offended queen!
 and her resentment to mankind, how just!
 With kind intent, soliciting access,
 how often has she knock'd at human hearts!
 rich to repay their hospitality,
 how often call'd! and with the voice of God!
 yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat!
 dream! while foulest foes found welcome there!
 dream, a cheat, now, all things, but her smile.
 For, lo! her twice ten thousand gates thrown wide,
 as thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,

With banners, streaming as the comet's blaze,
 And clarions, louder than the deep in storms,
 Sonorous as immortal breath can blow,
 Pour forth their myriads, potentates and powers,
 Of light, and darkness; in a middle field,
 Wide, as creation! populous, as wide!
 A neutral region! there to mark the event
 Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes
 Detain'd them close spectators, thro' a length
 Of ages, ripening to this grand result;
 Ages, as yet unnumber'd, but by God;
 Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates
 The rights of virtue, and his own renown.

ETERNITY, the various sentence past,
 Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,
 Sulphureous, or ambrosial: what ensues?
 The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
 Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven.
 The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns
 Her adamantyne key's enormous size
 Thro' destiny's inextricable wards,
 Deep-driving every bolt, on both their fates.
 Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven,
 Down, down, she hurls it thro' the dark profound,
 Ten thousand thousand fathom; there to rust,
 And ne'er unlock her resolution more.
 The deep resounds, and hell, thro' all her glooms,
 Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.

O how unlike the chorus of the skies!
 O how unlike those shouts of joy, that shake

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The whole ethereal! how the concave rings!
Nor strange! when deities their voice exalt;
And louder far, than when creation rose,
To see creation's godlike aim, and end,
So well accomplish'd! so divinely clos'd!
To see the mighty dramatist's last act
(As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest.
No fancy'd God, a God, indeed, descends,
To solve all knots; to strike the moral home;
To throw full day on darkest scenes of time;
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.
Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,
The charm'd spectators thunder their applause;
And the vast void beyond, applause resounds.

WHAT THEN AM I?—

Amidst applauding worlds,

And worlds celestial, is there found on earth,
A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string,
Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?
Censure on thee, Lorenzo! I suspend,
And turn it on myself; how greatly due!
All, all is right! by God ordain'd or done;
And who, but God, resum'd the friends he gave?
And have I been complaining, then, so long?
Complaining of his favours; pain, and death?
Who, without pain's advice, would e'er be good?
Who, without death, but would be good in vain?
Pain is to save from pain; all punishment,
To make for peace; and death to save from death;
And second death, to guard immortal life;

66 THE CONSOLATION:

To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
 And turn the tide of souls another way;
 By the same tenderness divine ordain'd,
 That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man,
 A fairer Eden, endless, in the skies.

Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene;
 Resumes them, to prepare us for the next.
 All evils natural are moral goods;
 All discipline, indulgence, on the whole.
 None are unhappy; all have cause to smile,
 But such as to themselves that cause deny.
 Our faults are at the bottom of our pains;
 Error, in act, or judgment, is the source
 Of endless sighs: we sin, or we mistake;
 And nature tax, when false opinion stings.
 Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd;
 But chiefly then, when grief puts in her claim.
 Joy from the joyous, frequently betrays,
 Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
 Joy, amidst ills, corroborates, exalts;
 'Tis joy, and conquest; joy, and virtue too.
 A noble fortitude in ills delights
 Heaven, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace.
 Affliction is the good man's shining scene;
 Prosperity conceals his brightest ray;
 As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.
 Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
 And virtue in calamities, admire.
 The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
 An evergreen, that stands the northern blast.

And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'Tis a prime part of happiness, to know
How much unhappiness must prove our lot;
A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it misery to be a man;
Who thinks it is, shall never be a god.

Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.

What spoke proud passion?—'t With my being lost!
Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!

The triumph of my soul is,—that I am;
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!

Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still;

Unfathomably deep our treasure runs

In golden veins thro' all eternity!

Ages, and ages, and succeeding still

New ages, where this phantom of an hour,

Which courts, each night, dull slumber, for repair,

Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,

And fly thro' infinite, and all unlock;

And (if deserv'd) by heaven's redundant love,

Made half-adorable itself, adore;

And find, in adoration, endless joy!

Where thou, not master of a moment here,

Trail as the flower, and fleeting as the gale,

May'st boast a whole eternity, enrich'd

With all a kind omnipotence can pour.

Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninspir'd,

† Referring to the first night.

Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,
 How kind is GOD, how great (if good) is man.
 No man too largely from heaven's love can hope,
 If what is hop'd he labours to secure.

Ills?—there are none: all-gracious! none from thee
 From man full many! numerous is the race
 Of blackest ill, and those immortal too,
 Begot by madness on fair liberty;
 Heaven's daughter, hell-debauch'd! her hand alone
 Unlocks destruction to the sons of men,
 Fast barr'd by thine; high-wall'd with adamant,
 Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,
 And cover'd with the thunders of thy law;
 Whose threats are mercies, whose injunctions, guides,
 Assisting, not restraining, reason's choice;
 Whose sanctions, unavoidable results
 From nature's course, indulgently reveal'd;
 If unreveal'd, more dangerous, nor less sure.
 Thus, an indulgent father warns his sons,
 'Do this; fly that'—nor always tells the cause?
 Pleas'd to reward, as duty to his will,
 A conduct needful to their own repose.

Great God of wonders! (if, thy love survey'd,
 Aught else the name of wonderful retains)
 What rocks are these, on which to build our trust?
 Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find;
 Or this alone—'that none is to be found.'
 Not one, to soften censure's hardy crime;
 Not one, to palliate peevish grief's complaint,
 Who, like a demon, murmuring, from the dust,

Dares into judgment call her judge—supreme!
For all I bless thee; most, for the severe;
Her death—my own at hand—the fiery gulph,
That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!
It thunders;—but it thunders to preserve;
It strengthens what it strikes; its wholesome dread
Averts the dreaded pain; its hideous groans
In heaven's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,
Great source of good alone! how kind in all!
Revengeance kind! pain, death, gehenna, *SAVE*.
Thus, in thy world material, mighty mind!
Not that alone which solaces, and shines,
The rough, and gloomy; challenges our praise.
The winter is as needful as the spring;
The thunder, as the sun; a stagnate mass
Of vapours breeds a pestilential air:
Or more propitious the Favonian breeze
To nature's health, than purifying storms;
The dread volcano ministers to good.
If smother'd flames might undermine the world.
And Ætnas fulminate in love to man;
Comets good omens are, when duly scann'd;
And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.
Man is responsible for ills-receiv'd;
Those we call wretched are a chosen band,
Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.
And my list of blessings infinite,
Hands this the foremost, 'That my heart has bled.'

10 THE CONSOLATION:

'Tis heaven's last effort of good-will to man;
 When pain can't bless, heaven quits us in despair.
 Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,
 Or grieves too much, deserves not to be blest;
 Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart;
 Reason absolves the grief, which reason ends.
 May heaven ne'er trust my friend with happiness,
 Till it has taught him how to bear it well,
 By previous pain; and made it safe to smile!
 Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain;
 Nor hazard their extinction, from excess.
 My change of heart a change of style demands;
 The Consolation cancels the Complaint,
 And makes a convert of my guilty song.

As when o'er-labour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,
 A panting traveller, some rising ground,
 Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round,
 And measures with his eye the various vale,
 The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has past;
 And, fatiate of his journey, thinks of home,
 Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil;
 Thus I, tho' small, indeed, is that ascent
 The muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod;
 Various, extensive, beaten but by few:
 And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
 Pause; and with pleasure meditate an end,
 Tho' still remote; so fruitful is my theme.
 Thro' many a field of moral, and divine,
 The muse has stray'd; and much of sorrow seen
 In human ways; and much of false and vain;

Which none, who travel this bad road, can miss.
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily she wept;
Of love divine the wonders she display'd;
Prov'd man immortal; shew'd the source of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds
Of human grief: in few, to close the whole,
The moral muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
Though not in form, nor with a Raphael-stroke,
Of most our weakness needs believe, or do,
In this our land of travel, and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

What then remains?—much! much! a mighty debt
To be discharg'd: these thoughts, O Night! are thine;
From thee they came, like lovers secret sighs,
While others slept. So, Cynthia (poets feign)
In shadows veil'd, soft-sliding from her sphere,
Her shepherd chear'd; of her enamour'd less,
Than I of thee,—and art thou still unsung,
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?
Immortal silence!—where shall I begin?
Where end? or how steal music from the spheres,
To sooth their goddess?

O majestic Night!

Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder born!
And fated to survive the transient sun!
By mortals, and immortals, seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heaven's loom
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,

Thy flowing mantle form; and, heaven through
Voluminously pour thy pompous train.

Thy gloomy grandeurs (nature's most august,
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse;
And, like a fable curtain starr'd with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.

And what, O man! so worthy to be sung?
What more prepares us for the songs of heaven?
Creation of archangels is the theme!
What, to be sung, so needful? what so well
Celestial joys prepares us to sustain?
The soul of man, his face design'd to see,
Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
Has here a previous scene of objects great,
On which to dwell; to stretch to that expanse
Of thought, to rise to that exalted height
Of admiration, to contract that awe,
And give her whole capacities that strength,
Which best may qualify for final joy.
The more our spirits are enlarg'd on earth,
The deeper draught shall they receive of heaven.

Heaven's KING! whose face unveil'd consummate
Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void, [bliss
The whole creation leaves in human hearts!
THOU, who didst touch the lip of Jesse's son,
Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,
And set his harp in concert with the spheres!
While of thy works material the supreme
I dare attempt, assist my daring song.
Loose me from earth's enclosure, from the sun's

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Contracted circle set my heart at large;
Eliminate my spirit, give it range
Through provinces of thought yet unexplor'd;
Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
Creation's golden steps, to climb to THEE.
Teach me with art great nature to controul,
And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night.
Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the sun
Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?
Lorenzo! come, and warm thee: thou, whose heart,
Whose little heart, is moor'd within a nook
Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh.
Another ocean calls, a nobler port;
I am thy pilot, I thy prosperous gale.
Gainful thy voyage thro' yon azure main;
Main, without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore;
And whence thou may'st import eternal wealth;
And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin;
Thy tour thro' nature's universal orb.
Nature delineates her whole chart at large,
A soaring souls, that sail among the spheres;
And man how purblind, if unknown the whole!
Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,
All own, he never was from home before!
Come, my † Prometheus, from thy pointed rock
False ambition, if unchain'd, we'll mount;

† Night the Eighth.

74 THE CONSOLATION:

We'll, innocently, steal celestial fire,
And kindle our devotion at the stars;
A theft, that shall not chain, but set thee free.

Above our atmosphere's intestine wars,
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;
Above the northern nests of feather'd snows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves
Where infant tempests wait their growing wings,
And tune their tender voices to that roar,
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world;
Above misconstru'd omens of the sky,
Far-travell'd comet's calculated blaze,
E lance thy thought, and think of more than man.
Thy soul, till now, contracted, wither'd, shrunk,
Blighted by blasts of earth's unwholesome air,
Will blossom here; spread all her faculties
To these bright ardors; every power unfold,
And rise into sublimities of thought.
Stars teach, as well as shine. At nature's birth,
'Thus, their commission ran—' Be kind to man.'
Where art thou, poor benighted traveller!
The stars will light thee, tho' the moon should fail.
Where art thou, more benighted! more astray!
In ways immoral? the stars call thee back;
And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.

This prospect vast, what is it?—weigh'd aright,
'Tis nature's system of divinity,
And every student of the night inspires.
'Tis elder scripture, writ by God's own hand:

Scripture authentic! uncorrupt by man.
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift
Of thought nocturnal!) I'll point out to thee
Its various lessons; some that may surprise
An un-adept in mysteries of night;
Little, perhaps, expected in her school,
Nor thought to grow on planet, or on star.
Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign;
Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here
Exists indeed;—a lecture to mankind.

What read we here?—the existence of a God?

Yes; and of other beings, man above;

Natives of ether! sons of higher climes!

And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,
Eternity is written in the skies.

And whose eternity?—Lorenzo! thine;

Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,

Virtue grows here; here springs the sovereign cure

Of almost every vice; but chiefly thine;

Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo! thou canst wake at midnight too,

Tho' not on morals bent: ambition, pleasure!

Those tyrants I for thee so * lately fought,

Afford their harrafs'd slaves but slender rest.

Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,

And the sun's noon-tide blaze, prime dawn of day;

Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,

Commencing one of our Antipodes!

76 THE CONSOLATION:

In thy nocturnal rove, one moment halt,
 'Twixt stage and stage, of riot, and cabal;
 And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,
 If bold to meet the face of injur'd heaven)
 To yonder stars: for other ends they shine,
 Than to light revellers from shame to shame,
 And, thus, be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon arch, that infinite of space,
 With infinite of lucid orbs replete,
 Which set the living firmament on fire,
 At the first glance, in such an overwhelm
 Of wonderful, on man's astonish'd sight,
 Rushes Omnipotence?—to curb our pride;
 Our reason rouse, and lead it to that power,
 Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;
 To draw up man's ambition to himself,
 And bind our chaste affections to his throne.
 Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,
 And welcom'd on heaven's coast with most applause,
 An humble, pure, and heavenly-minded heart,
 Are here inspir'd:—and canst thou gaze too long?

Nor stands thy wrath depriv'd of its reproof,
 Or un-upbraided by this radiant choir.
 The planets of each system represent
 Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;
 Sweet interchange of rays. receiv'd, return'd;
 Enlightening, and enlighten'd! all, at once,
 Attracting, and attracted! patriot-like,
 None sins against the welfare of the whole;
 But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,

Affords an emblem of millennial love.
Nothing in nature, much less conscious being,
Was e'er created solely for itself:
Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this
Material picture of benevolence.

And know, of all our supercilious race,
Thou most inflammable! thou wasp of men!
Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found
As rightly set, as are the starry spheres;
'Tis nature's structure, broke by stubborn will,
Breeds all that un-celestial discord there.
Wilt thou not feel the bias nature gave?
Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,
And seize thy brother's throat?—for what—a clod,
An inch of earth? the planets cry, 'Forbear.'
They chase our double darkness; nature's gloom,
And (kinder still!) our intellectual night.

And see, day's amiable sister sends
Her invitation, in the softest rays
Of mitigated lustre; courts thy sight,
Which suffers from her tyrant brother's blaze.
Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,
Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;
With gain, and joy, she bribes thee to be wise.
Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe,
Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,
And deep reception, in the intender'd heart;
While light peeps thro' the darkness, like a spy;
And darkness shews its grandeur by the light.
Nor is the profit greater than the joy,

95 THE CONSOLATION:

If human hearts at glorious objects glow,
And admiration can inspire delight.

What speak I more, than I, this moment, feel!
With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck
(Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise!)
Then into transport starting from her trance,
With love, and admiration, how she glows!
This gorgeous apparatus! this display!
This ostentation of creative power!
This theatre!—what eye can take it in?
By what divine enchantment was it rais'd,
For minds of the first magnitude to launch
In endless speculation, and adore?
One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine;
And light us deep into the DEITY;
How boundless in magnificence and might!
O what a confluence of ethereal fires,
From urns un-number'd, down the steep of heaven
Streams to a point, and centers in my sight!
Nor tarries there; I feel it at my heart.
My heart, at once, it humbles, and exalts;
Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.
Who sees it unexalted? or unaw'd?
Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen?
Material offspring of Omnipotence!
Inanimate, all-animating birth!
Work worthy him who made it! worthy praise!
All praise! praise more than human! nor deny'd
Thy praise divine!—But tho' man, drown'd in sleep
With-holds his homage, not alone I wake;

Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing, unheard
By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,
In this his universal temple hung
With lustres, with innumerable lights,
That shed religion on the soul; at once,
The temple, and the preacher! O how loud
It calls devotion! genuine growth of night!

Devotion! daughter of astronomy!

An undevout astronomer is mad.

True; all things speak a God; but in the small,
Men trace out him; in great, he seizes man;
Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills
With new inquiries, 'mid associates new.
Tell me, ye stars! ye planets! tell me, all
Ye starr'd, and planeted, inhabitants! what is it?
What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud arch!
(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)

Built with divine ambition! in disdain
Of limit built! built in the taste of heaven!
Vast concave! ample dome! wast thou design'd
A meet apartment for the DEITY?—
Not so; that thought alone thy state impairs,
Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,
And streightens thy diffusive; dwarfs the whole,
And makes an universe an orrery.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,
Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restor'd,
Nature! wide flies off the expanding round.
As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,
The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow;

80 THE CONSOLATION:

The vast displosion dissipates the clouds ;
 Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies ;
 Thus (but far more) the expanding round flies off,
 And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,
 Might teem with new creation ; re-inflam'd
 Thy luminaries triumph, and assume
 Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange,
 Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,
 Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,
 From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense ;
 For, sure, to sense, they truly are divine,
 And half-absolv'd idolatry from guilt ;
 Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was
 In those, who put forth all they had of man
 Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher ;
 But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd ; and thought
 What was their highest, must be their ador'd.

But they how weak, who could no higher mount
 And are there, then, Lorenzo ! those, to whom
 Unseen, and unexistent, are the same ?
 And if incomprehensible is join'd,
 Who dare pronounce it madness, to believe ?
 Why has the mighty BUILDER thrown aside
 All measure in his work ; stretch'd out his line
 So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole ?
 Then—(as he took delight in wide extremes,)
 Deep in the bosom of his universe,
 Dropt down that reasoning mite, that insect, man,
 To crawl and gaze, and wonder at the scene ?—
 That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement

For disbelief of wonders in himself.
Shall God be less miraculous, than what
His hand has form'd? shall mysteries descend
From unmysterious? things more elevate,
Be more familiar? uncreated lie
More obvious than created, to the grasp
Of human thought? the more of wonderful
Is heard in him, the more we should assent.
Could we conceive him, God he could not be;
Or he not God, or we could not be men.
A God alone can comprehend a God;
Man's distance how immense! on such a theme,
Know this, Lorenzo! (seem it ne'er so strange)
Nothing can satisfy, but what confounds;
Nothing, but what astonishes, is true.
The scene thou seest, attests the truth I sing,
And every star sheds light upon thy creed.
These stars, this furniture, this coast of heaven,
But reported, thou hadst ne'er believ'd;
And thine eye tells thee, the romance is true.
The grand of nature is the Almighty's oath,
Reason's court, to silence unbelief.
Now my mind, opening at this scene, imbibes
The moral emanations of the skies,
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires!
As the great Sovereign sent ten thousand worlds
To tell us, he resides above them all,
In glory's unapproachable recess?
And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
The sumptuous, the magnificent embassy

A moment's audience? turn we, nor will hear
 From whom they come, or what they would impart
 For man's emolument; sole cause that stoops
 Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo? rouse;
 Let thought, awaken'd, take the light'ning's wing,
 And glance from east to west, from pole to pole.
 Who sees, but is confounded, or convinc'd?
 Renounces reason, or a God adores?
 Mankind was sent into the world to see:
 Sight gives the science needful to their peace;
 That obvious science asks small learning's aid.
 Wouldst thou on Metaphysic pinions soar?
 Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns?
 Or travel history's enormous round?
 Nature no such hard task enjoins: she gave
 A make to man directive of his thought;
 A make set upright, pointing to the stars,
 As who should say, 'read thy chief lesson there.'
 Too late to read this manuscript of heaven,
 When, like a parchment-scroll, shrunk up by flame
 It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight.

Lesson how various! not the God alone,
 I see his ministers; I see, diffus'd
 In radiant orders, essences sublime,
 Of various offices, of various plume,
 In heavenly liveries, distinctly clad,
 Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
 Or all commix'd; they stand, with wings outspread
 Listening to catch the master's least command,
 And fly thro' nature, ere the moment ends;

Numbers innumerable ! well conceiv'd
By Pagan, and by Christian ! o'er each sphere
Presides an angel, to direct its course,
And feed, or fan, its flames ; or to discharge
Other high trusts unknown. For who can see
Such pomp of matter, and imagine, mind,
For which alone inanimate was made,
More sparingly dispens'd ? that nobler son,
Far liker the great SIRE !—'tis thus the skies
Inform us of superiors numberless,
As much, in excellence, above mankind,
As above earth, in magnitude, the spheres.
These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us ;
As a throng'd theatre are all our deeds ;
Perhaps, a thousand demi-gods descend
On every beam we see, to walk with men.
A awful reflection strong ! restraint from ill !
Yet, here, our virtue finds still stronger aid
From these ethereal glories sense surveys.
Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault ;
With just attention is it view'd ? we feel
Hidden succour, un-implor'd, unthought ;
Nature herself does half the work of man.
As, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
The promontory's height, the depth profound
Of subterranean, excavated grots,
Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide
From nature's structure, or the scoop of time ;
A sample of dimension, vast of size,
From these an aggrandizing impulse give ;

84 THE CONSOLATION:

Of solemn thought, enthusiastic heights
 Even these infuse.—But what of vast in these?
 Nothing;—or we must own the skies forgot.
 Much less in art,—vain art! thou pigmy power!
 How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,
 To shew thy littleness! what childish toys,
 Thy watry columns squirted to the clouds!
 Thy bason'd rivers, and imprison'd seas!
 Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!
 Thy hundred-gated capitals! or those
 Where three days travel left us much to ride;
 Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
 Arches triumphal, theatres immense,
 Or nodding gardens pendent in mid-air!
 Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!
 Yet these affect us in no common kind.
 What then the force of such superior scenes?
 Enter a temple, it will strike an awe:
 What awe from this the DEITY has built?
 A good man seen, tho' silent, counsel gives:
 The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise:
 In a bright mirror his own hands have made,
 Here we see something like the face of God.
 Seems it not then enough, to say, Lorenzo!
 To man abandon'd, 'Hast thou seen the skies?'

And yet, so thwarted nature's kind design
 By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
 (That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
 To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
 Celestial arts intent. The trembling stars

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See crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night still darker by their deeds.
Slumbering in covert, till the shades descend,
Rapine and murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
The miser earths his treasure; and the thief,
Watching the mole, half-beggars him e'er morn.
Now plots, and foul conspiracies, awake;
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
Havock and devastation they prepare,
And kingdoms tottering in the field of blood.
Now sons of riot in mid revel rage.
What shall I do?—suppress it? or proclaim?—
Why sleeps the thunder! now, Lorenzo! now,
His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
Ascends secure; and laughs at gods and men.
Preposterous madmen, void of fear or shame,
Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of heaven;
Yet shrink, and shudder, at a mortal's sight.
Were moon, and stars, for villains only made?
To guide, yet screen them, with tenebrious light?
No; they were made to fashion the sublime
Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.
Those ends were answer'd once; when mortals liv'd
Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent
In theory sublime. O how unlike
Those vermin of the night, this moment fung,
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!
Those ancient sages, human stars! they met
Their brothers of the skies, at midnight hour;

Their counsel ask'd; and, what they ask'd, obey'd.
 The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank
 The poison'd bowl, and he of Tusculum,
 With him of Corduba (immortal names!)
 In these unbounded, and Elysian, walks,
 An area fit for gods, and godlike men,
 They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths
 By seraphs trod; instructed, chiefly, thus,
 To tread in their bright footsteps here below;
 To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.
 There, they contracted their contempt of earth;
 Of hopes eternal kindled, there, the fire;
 There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
 (Great visitants!) more intimate with God,
 More worth to men, more joyous to themselves.
 Thro' various virtues, they, with ardor, ran
 The zodiac of their learn'd, illustrious lives.

In Christian hearts, O for a Pagan zeal!
 A needful, but opprobrious prayer! as much
 Our ardor less, as greater is our light.
 How monstrous this in morals! scarce more strange
 Would this phaenomenon in nature strike,
 A sun, that froze us, or a star, that warm'd.

What taught these heroes of the moral world?
 To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.
 These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee
 And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught,
 That, narrow views betray to misery:
 That, wise it is to comprehend the whole:
 That, virtue rose from nature, ponder'd well,

The single base of virtue built to heaven :
That, God, and nature, our attention claim :
That, nature is the glass reflecting God,
As, by the sea, reflected is the sun,
Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his sphere :
That, mind immortal loves immortal aims :
That, boundless mind affects a boundless space :
That, vast surveys, and the sublime of things,
The soul assimilate, and make her great :
That, therefore, heaven her glories, as a fund
Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.
Such are their doctrines; such the night inspir'd.
And what more true! what truth of greater weight?
The soul of man was made to walk the skies;
Delightful outlet of her prison here!
There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;
There, freely can respire, dilate, extend,
To full proportion let loose all her powers;
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
Nor, as a stranger, does she wander there;
But, wonderful herself, thro' wonder strays;
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;
Dives deep in their oeconomy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a master, judges not amiss.
Hence greatly pleas'd, and justly proud, the soul
Grows conscious of her birth celestial; breathes
More life, more vigour, in her native air;
And feels herself at home among the stars;

And, feeling, emulates her country's praise.

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo!
 As earth the body, since, the skies sustain
 The soul with food, that gives immortal life,
 Call it, the noble pasture of the mind;
 Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,
 And riots through the luxuries of thought.
 Call it, the garden of the Deity,
 Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
 Of fruit ambrosial; moral fruit to man.
 Call it, the breast-plate of the true high-priest,
 Ardent with gems oracular, that give,
 In points of highest moment, right response;
 And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus, have we found a true astrology;
 Thus, have we found a new, and noble sense,
 In which alone stars govern human fates.
 O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall
 Bloodshed, and havock, on embattled realms,
 And rescu'd monarchs from so black a guilt!
 Bourbon; this wish how generous in a foe!
 Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
 And stick thy deathless name among the stars,
 For mighty conquests on a needle's point?
 Instead of forging chains for foreigners,
 Bastile thy tutor: grandeur all thy aim?
 As yet thou know'st not what it is: how great,
 How glorious, then, appears the mind of man,
 When in it all the stars, and planets, roll!
 And what it seems, it is: great objects make

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Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;
Those still more godlike, as these more divine.

And more divine than these, thou canst not see.
Dazzled, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught
Of miscellaneous splendors, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!
An Eden, this! a paradise unlost!

I meet the Deity in every view,
And tremble at my nakedness before him!
O that I could but reach the tree of life!
For here it grows, unguarded from our taste;
No flaming sword denies our entrance here;
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.

Lorenzo! much of moral hast thou seen.
Of curious arts art thou more fond! then mark
The mathematic glories of the skies,
In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boasted builders, chance, and fate,
Are left to finish his ærial towers;
Wisdom, and choice, their well-known characters
Here deep impress; and claim it for their own.
Tho' splendid all, no splendor void of use;
Use rivals beauty: art contends with power;
No wanton waste, amid effuse expence;
The great Oeconomist adjusting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise.
How rich the prospect! and for ever new!
And newest to the man that views it most;
For newer still in infinite succeeds.

Then, these ærial racers, O how swift!

90 THE CONSOLATION:

How the shaft loiters from the strongest string!
 Spirit alone can distance the career.
 Orb above orb ascending without end!
 Circle in circle, without end, enclos'd!
 Wheel within wheel, Ezekiel! like to thine!
 Like thine, it seems a vision, or a dream;
 Tho' seen, we labour to believe it true!
 What involution! what extent! what swarms
 Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immensely great!
 Immensely distant from each other's spheres;
 What then, the wondrous space thro' which they roll
 At once it quite ingulphs all human thought;
 'Tis comprehension's absolute defeat.

Nor think thou see'st a wild disorder here;
 Thro' this illustrious chaos to the sight,
 Arrangement neat, and chastest order, reign.
 The path prescrib'd, inviolably kept,
 Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind.
 Worlds, ever thwarting, never interfere;
 What knots are ty'd! how soon are they dissolv'd,
 And set the seeming marry'd planets free!
 They rove for ever, without error rove;
 Confusion unconfus'd! nor less admire
 This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!
 In motion, all! yet what profound repose!
 What fervid action, yet no noise! as aw'd
 To silence, by the presence of their LORD;
 Or hush'd, by his command, in love to man,
 And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,
 Restless themselves. On yon coerulean plain,

In exultation to their God, and thine,
They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,
Eternal celebration of his praise.

But, since their song arrives not at our ear,
Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the sight
Fair hieroglyphic of his peerless power.

Mark, how the labyrinthian turns they take,
The circles intricate, and mystic maze,
Weave the grand cypher of Omnipotence;
To gods, how great! how legible to man!

Leaves so much wonder greater wonder still?
Where are the pillars that support the skies?
What more than Atlantean shoulder props
The incumbent load? what magic, what strange art,
In fluid air these pond'rous orbs sustains?
Who would not think them hung in golden chains?—
And so they are; in the high will of heaven,
Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,
Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,
Or nought of all; if such the dread decree.

Imagine from their deep foundations torn
The most gigantic sons of earth, the broad
And towering Alps, all tost into the sea;
And, light as down, or volatile as air,
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
In time, and measure, exquisite; while all
The winds, in emulation of the spheres,
Tune their sonorous instruments aloft;
The concert swell, and animate the ball.
Would this appear amazing? What, then, worlds,

92 THE CONSOLATION:

In a far thinner element sustain'd,
And acting the same part, with greater skill,
More rapid movement, and for noblest ends?

More obvious ends to pass, are not these stars
The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,
On which angelic delegates of heaven,
At certain periods, as the sovereign nods,
Discharge high trusts of vengeance, or of love;
To clothe, in outward grandeur, grand design,
And acts most solemn still more solemnize?

Ye citizens of air! what ardent thanks,
What full effusion of the grateful heart,
Is due from man indulg'd in such a sight!
A sight so noble! and a sight so kind!
It drops new truths at every new survey!
Feels not Lorenzo something stir within,
That sweeps away all periods? As these spheres
Measure duration, they no less inspire
The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundless space, thro' which these rovers take
Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought
Of boundless time. Thus, by kind nature's skill,
To man un-labour'd, that important guest,
Eternity, finds entrance at the sight:
And an eternity, for man ordain'd,
Or these his destin'd midnight counsellors.
The stars, had never whisper'd it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons.
Could she then kindle the most ardent wish
To disappoint it?—that is blasphemy.

Thus, of thy creed a second article,
Momentous, as the existence of a God,
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought;
And thou may'st read thy soul immortal, here.
Here, then, Lorenzo! on these glories dwell;
Nor want the gilt, illuminated, roof,
That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
Assemblies?—this is one divinely bright;
Here, un-endanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
Range thro' the fairest, and the Sultan scorn.
The, wise as thou, no crescent holds so fair,
As that, which on his turbant awes a world;
And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.
Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
A mind superior to the charms of power.
Thou muffled in delusions of this life!
Can yonder moon turn ocean in his bed,
From side to side, in constant ebb, and flow,
And purify from stench his watery realms?
And fails her moral influence? wants she power
To turn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought
From stagnating on earth's infected shore,
And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart?
Kills her attraction when it draws to heaven?
Nay, and to what thou valu'st more, earth's joy?
Kinds elevate, and panting for unseen,
And defecate from sense, alone obtain
All relish of existence un-deflower'd,
The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss.
All else on earth amounts—to what? to this:

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And elevate, and panting for unseen,
And defecate from sense, alone obtain
All relish of existence un-deflower'd,
The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss.
Else on earth amounts—to what? to this:

94 THE CONSOLATION:

' Bad to be suffer'd ; blessings to be left :'
Earth's richest inventory boasts no more.

Of higher scenes be, then, the call obey'd.
O let me gaze !—of gazing there's no end.
Oh let me think !—thought too is wilder'd here ;
In mid-way flight imagination tires ;
Yet soon re-prunes her wing to soar anew,
Her point unable to forbear, or gain ;
So great the pleasure, so profound the plan !
A banquet, this, where men, and angels, meet,
Eat the same manna, mingle earth, and heaven.
How distant some of these nocturnal suns !
So distant (says the sage,) 'twere not absurd
To doubt, if beams, set out at nature's birth,
Are yet arriv'd at this so foreign world ;
Tho' nothing half so rapid as their flight.
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll
And roll for ever : who can satiate sight
In such a scene ? in such an ocean wide
Of deep astonishment ? where depth, height, breadth
Are lost in their extremes ; and where to count
The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,
Perhaps a seraph's computation fails.
Now go, ambition ! boast thy boundless might,
In conquest o'er the tenth part of a grain.

And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles,
To give his tottering faith a solid base.
Why call for less than is already thine ?
Thou art no novice in theology ;
What is a miracle ? 'tis a reproach,

'Tis an implicit satire, on mankind ;
And while it satisfies, it censures too.
To common sense, great nature's course proclaims
Deity : when mankind falls asleep,
A miracle is sent, as an alarm,
To wake the world, and prove him o'er again,
By recent argument, but not more strong.
Say, which imports more plenitude of power,
Or nature's laws to fix, or to repeal ?
To make a sun, or stop his mid-career ?
To countermand his orders, and send back
The flaming courier to the frightened east,
Starm'd, and astonish'd, at his evening ray ?
Or bid the moon, as with her journey tir'd,
In Ajalon's soft, flowery vale repose ?
Great things are these ; still greater, to create :
From Adam's bower look down thro' the whole train
Of miracles ;—resistless is their power ?
They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,
Than this, call'd unmiraculous survey,
Duly weigh'd, if rationally seen,
Seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
Sees nought but spangles here ; the fool, no more.
Say'st thou, ' the course of nature governs all ?'
The course of nature is the art of God.
The miracles thou call'st for, this attest ;
Or say, could nature nature's course controul.
But, miracles apart, who sees HIM not,
Nature's controul, author, guide, and end ?
Who turns his eye on nature's midnight face,

96 THE CONSOLATION:

But must inquire—‘ What hand behind the scene,
 ‘ What arm almighty, put these wheeling globes
 ‘ In motion, and wound up the vast machine?
 ‘ Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?
 ‘ Who bowl’d them flaming thro’ the dark profound
 ‘ Numerous as glittering gems of morning-dew,
 ‘ Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
 ‘ And set the bosom of old night on fire?
 ‘ Peopled her desert, and made horror smile?
 Or, if the military style delights thee,
 (For stars have fought their battles, leagu’d with man
 ‘ Who marshals this bright host? enrolls their names
 ‘ Appoints their post, their marches, and returns,
 ‘ Punctual, at stated periods? who disbands
 ‘ These veteran troops, their final duty done,
 ‘ If e’er disbanded?—He, whose potent word,
 Like the loud trumpet, levy’d first their powers
 In night’s inglorious empire, where they slept
 In beds of darkness; arm’d them with fierce flames
 Arrang’d, and disciplin’d, and cloath’d in gold;
 And call’d them out of chaos to the field,
 Where now they war with vice and unbelief.
 O let us join this army! joining these,
 Will give us hearts intrepid, at that hour,
 When brighter flames shall cut a darker night;
 When these strong demonstrations of a God
 Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres
 And one eternal curtain cover all!

Struck at that thought, as new-awak’d, I lift
 A more enlighten’d eye, and read the stars

no man still more propitious; and their aid
(Tho' guiltless of idolatry) implore;
nor longer rob them of their noblest name.
O ye dividers of my time! ye bright
accountants of my days, and months, and years,
in your fair kalendar distinctly mark'd!
Since that authentic, radiant register,
Tho' man inspects it not, stands good against him;
Since you, and years, roll on, tho' man stands still;
Teach me my days to number, and apply
My trembling heart to wisdom; now beyond
All shadow of excuse for fooling on.
Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside
The snares, keen appetite, and passion, spread
To catch stray souls; and woe to that gray head,
Whose folly would undo, what age has done!
Aid, then, aid, all ye stars!—much rather, Thou,
Great ARTIST! Thou, whose finger set aright
This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,
Thou' intervolv'd, exact; and pointing out
Life's rapid, and irrevocable flight,
With such an index fair, as none can miss,
Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is clos'd,
Open mine eye, dread DEITY! to read
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to see
Things as they are, un-alter'd thro' the glass
Of worldly wishes. Time, eternity!
Tis these, mis-measur'd, ruin all mankind)
Set them before me; let me lay them both
On equal scale, and learn their various weight.

98 THE CONSOLATION:

Let time appear a moment, as it is;
And let eternity's full orb, at once,
Turn on my soul, and strike it into heaven.
When shall I see far more than charms me now?
Gaze on creation's model in thy breast
Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more?
When, this vile, foreign, dust, which smothers all
That travel earth's deep vale, shall I shake off?
When shall my soul her incarnation quit,
And, re-adopted to thy blest embrace,
Obtain her apotheosis in THEE?

Dost think, Lorenzo! this is wand'ring wide?
No, 'tis directly striking at the mark;
To wake thy dead devotion * was my point;
And how I bless night's consecrating shades,
Which to a temple turn an universe;
Fill us with great ideas, full of heaven,
And antidote the pestilential earth!
In every storm, that either frowns, or falls,
What an asylum has the soul in prayer!
And what a fane is this, in which to pray!
And what a God must dwell in such a fane!
O what a genius must inform the skies!
And is Lorenzo's salamander-heart,
Cold, and untouch'd, amid these sacred fires?
O ye nocturnal sparks! ye glowing embers,
On heaven's broad hearth! who burn, or burn no more
Who blaze, or die, as great JEHOVAH's breath

* Vol. II. page 74.

blows you, or forbears; assist my song;
your whole influence; exorcise his heart,
long posselt; and bring him back to man.
And is Lorenzo a demurrer still?
side in thy parts provokes thee to contest
truths; which, contested, put thy parts to shame.
for shame they more Lorenzo's head than heart;
faithless heart, how despicably small!
too straight, aught great, or generous, to receive!
fill'd with an atom! fill'd, and foul'd, with self!
and self mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!
instincts and passions, of the nobler kind,
suffocated there; or they alone,
reason apart, would wake high hope; and open,
ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere,
where order, wisdom, goodness, providence,
their endless miracles of love display,
and promise all the truly great desire.
The mind that would be happy, must be great;
great, in its wishes; great, in its surveys.
Extended views a narrow mind extend;
push out its corrugate, expansive make,
which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace.
A man of compass makes a man of worth;
divine contemplate, and become divine. A
As man was made for glory, and for bliss, 02
All littleness is in approach to woe;
open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
and let in manhood; let in happiness;
admit the boundless theatre of thought

From nothing, up to God; which makes a man.
 Take God from nature, nothing great is left;
 Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees;
 Man's heart is in the jakes, and loves the mire.
 Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
 See thy distress! how close art thou besieg'd!
 Besieg'd by nature, thy proud sceptic's foe!
 Enclos'd by these innumerable worlds,
 Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,
 As in a golden net of Providence,
 How art thou caught, sure captive of belief!
 From this thy blest captivity, what art,
 What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free!
 This scene is heaven's indulgent violence:
 Canst thou bear up against this tide of glory?
 What is earth bosom'd in these ambient orbs,
 But, faith in God impos'd, and press'd on man?
 Dar'st thou still litigate thy desperate cause,
 Spite of these numerous, awful, witnesses,
 And doubt the deposition of the skies?
 O how laborious is thy way to ruin!

Laborious? 'tis impracticable quite;
 To sink beyond a doubt, in this debate,
 With all his weight of wisdom, and of will,
 And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
 Some wish they did; but no man disbelieves.
 God is a spirit; spirit cannot strike
 These gross, material organs; God by man
 As much is seen, as man a God can see,
 In these astonishing exploits of power.

That order, beauty, motion, distance, size!
Concertion of design, how exquisite!
How complicate, in their divine police!
Apt means! great ends! consent to general good!—
Each attribute of these material gods,
So long (and that with specious pleas) ador'd,
Separate conquest gains o'er rebel thought;
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.
Lorenzo! this may seem harangue to thee;
Each all is apt to seem, that thwarts our will.
And dost thou, then, demand a simple proof,
Of this great master-moral of the skies,
Unskill'd, or dis-inclin'd, to read it there?
Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,
Take it, in one compact, unbroken chain.
Each proof insists on an attentive ear;
Will not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
And, for thy notice, struggle with the world.
Retire;—the world shut out,—thy thoughts call
Imagination's airy wing repress;— [home;—
Lock up thy senses;—let no passion stir;—
Take all to reason;—let her reign alone;—
When, in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth
Of nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,
As I have done; and shall inquire no more.
In nature's channel, thus the questions run.
'What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know,
But that I am; and, since I am, conclude
Something eternal: had there e'er been nought,
Nought still had been: eternal there must be.—

- ' But what eternal!—why not human race?
 ' And Adam's ancestors without an end?—
 ' That's hard to be conceiv'd; since every link
 ' Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail;
 ' Can every part depend, and not the whole?
 ' Yet grant it true; new difficulties rise;
 ' I'm still quite out at sea; nor see the shore.
 ' Whence earth, and these bright orbs?—eternal too?
 ' Grant matter was eternal? still these orbs
 ' Would want some other father;—much design
 ' Is seen in all their motions, all their makes;
 ' Design implies intelligence, and art:
 ' That can't be from themselves—or man; that
 ' Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow?
 ' And nothing greater, yet allow'd, than man.—
 ' Who, motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
 ' Shot thro' vast masses of enormous weight?
 ' Who bid brute matter's restive lump assume
 ' Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
 ' Has matter innate motion? then each atom,
 ' Asserting its indisputable right
 ' To dance, would form an universe of dust:
 ' Has matter none? then whence these glorious forms
 ' And boundless flights, from shapeless, and repos
 ' Has matter more than motion? has it thought,
 ' Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learn'd
 ' In mathematics? has it fram'd such laws,
 ' Which but to guess, a Newton made immortal?
 ' If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,
 ' Who think a clod inferior to a man!

If art, to form; and counsel, to conduct;
And that with greater far, than human skill;
Resides not in each block;—a GODHEAD reigns.—
Grant, then, invisible, eternal, MIND;
That granted, all is solv'd.—But, granting that,
Draw I not o'er me still a darker cloud?
Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive?
A being without origin, or end!—
Hail, human liberty! there is no God—
Yet, why? on either scheme that knot subsists;
Subsist it must, in God, or human race;
If in the last, how many knots beside,
Indissoluble all!—why chuse it there,
Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
Reject it, where, that chosen, all the rest
Dispers'd, leave reason's whole horizon clear?
This is not reason's dictate; reason says,
Close with the side where one grain turns the scale;
What vast preponderance is here! can reason
With louder voice exclaim—Believe a God?
And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.
What things impossible must man think true,
On any other system! and how strange
To disbelieve, thro' mere credulity!
If, in this chain, Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link, in which a flaw he finds
And, if a God there is, that God how great!
How great that Power, whose providential care
Thro' these bright orbs dark centers darts a ray!

Of nature universal threads the whole!
 And hangs creation, like a precious gem,
 'Tho' little, on the footstool of his throne!

That little gem, how large! a weight let fall
 From a fixt star, in ages can it reach
 This distant earth? say, then, Lorenzo! where,
 Where, ends this mighty building? where, begin
 The suburbs of creation? where the wall
 Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
 Of non-existence? Nothing's strange abode!
 Say, at what point of space JEHOVAH dropp'd
 His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
 Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite, no more?
 Where, rears his terminating pillar high
 Its extra-mundane head? and says, to Gods,
 In characters illustrious as the sun,

“ I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce

“ The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd:

“ Shout, all ye Gods! nor shout, ye Gods alone;

“ Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,

“ That rests, or rolls, ye heights, and depths, resound

“ Resound! resound! ye depths, and heights, resound

Hard are those questions?—answer harder still.

Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,

The solitary son of power divine?

Or has the Almighty FATHER, with a breath,
 Impregnated the womb of distant space?

Has he not bid, in various provinces,

Brother-creations the dark bowels burst

Of night primeval; barren, now, no more?

And he, the central sun, transpiercing all
Those giant-generations, which disport,
And dance, as motes, in his meridian ray ;
That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd,
In that abyfs of horror, whence they sprung ;
While chaos triumphs, re-possess'd of all
Rival creation ravish'd from his throne ?
Chaos ! of nature both the womb, and grave !
Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo, spreads too wide ?
Is this extravagant ?—no ; this is just ;
Just, in conjecture, tho' 'twere false in fact.
If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung
From noble root, high thought of the MOST-HIGH.
But wherefore error ? who can prove it such ?
He that can set Omnipotence a bound.
Can man conceive beyond what God can do ?
Nothing, but quite impossible, is hard.
He summons into being, with like ease,
A whole creation, and a single grain.
Speaks he the word ? a thousand worlds are born !—
A thousand worlds ? there's space for millions more ;
And in what space can his great *fiat* fail ?
Condemn me not, cold critic ! but indulge
The warm imagination : why condemn ?
Why not indulge such thoughts, as swell our hearts
With fuller admiration of that Power,
Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell ?
Why not indulge in his augmented praise ?
Parts not his glory a still brighter ray,
The less is left to chaos, and the realms

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Of hideous night, where fancy strays aghast :
 And, tho' most talkative, makes no report ?
 Still seems my thought enormous ? think again ;—
 Experience' self shall aid thy lame belief.
 Glasses (that revelation to the sight !)
 Have they not led us in the deep disclose
 Of fine-spun nature, exquisitely small,
 And, tho' demonstrated, still ill-conceiv'd ?
 If, then, on the reverse, the mind would mount
 In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,
 To keep the balance, and creation poise ?
 Defect alone can err on such a theme ;
 What is too great, if we the cause survey ?
 Stupendous ARCHITECT ! thou, thou art all !
 My soul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,
 And finds herself but at the center still !
 I AM, thy name ! existence, all thine own !
 Creation's nothing ; flatter'd much, if styl'd
 ' The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God.'

O for the voice—of what ? of whom ?—what voice
 Can answer to my wants, in such ascent,
 As dares to deem one universe too small ?
 Tell me, Lorenzo ! (for now fancy glows,
 Fir'd in the vortex of almighty power)
 Is not this home creation, in the map
 Of universal nature, as a speck,
 Like fair Britannia in our little ball ;
 Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its size,
 But, elsewhere, far out-measur'd, far out-shone ?
 In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)

Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost
Too small for notice, in the vast of beings;
Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space,
From other realms; from ampler continents
Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
Less northern, less remote from Deity,
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme;
Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth
Luxuriant growths; nor the late autumn wait
Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?

Yet why drown fancy in such depths as these?
Return, presumptuous rover! and confess
The bounds of man; nor blame them, as too small.
Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen?
Full ample the dominions of the sun!
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
The matchless monarch, from his flaming throne,
Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,
Farther, and faster, than a thought can fly,
And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
This Heliopolis, by greater far,
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile, was built;
And he alone, who built it, can destroy.
Beyond this city, why strays human thought?
One wonderful, enough for man to know!
One infinite, enough for man to range!
One firmament, enough for man to read!
O what voluminous instruction here!
What page of wisdom is deny'd him? none;
Learning his chief lesson makes him wise.

Nor is instruction, here, our only gain ;
 There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,
 Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts.
 How eloquently shines the glowing pole!
 With what authority it gives its charge,
 Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
 'Tho' silent, loud ! heard earth around ; above
 The planets heard ; and not unheard in hell ;
 Hell has her wonder, tho' too proud to praise.
 Is earth, then, more infernal ? has she those,
 Who neither praise (Lorenzo !) nor admire ?

Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engag'd,
 Ne'er ask'd the moon one question ; never held
 Least correspondence with a single star ;
 Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of heaven
 Walking in brightness ; or her train ador'd.
 Their sublunary rivals have long since
 Engross'd his whole devotion ; stars malign,
 Which make their fond astronomer run mad ;
 Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart ;
 Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace
 To momentary madness, call'd delight.
 Idolater, more gross than ever kiss'd
 The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out
 The blood to Jove ;—O THOU, to whom belongs
 All sacrifice ! O thou great Jove unfeign'd !
 Divine instructor ! thy first volume, this,
 For man's perusal ; all in capitals !
 In moon and stars (heaven's golden alphabet !)
 Emblaz'd to seize the sight ; who runs, may read ;

Who reads, can understand. 'Tis unconfin'd
To Christian land, or Jewry; fairly writ,
In language universal, to mankind:
A language, lofty to the learn'd; yet plain
To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or, from its husk, strike out the bounding grain.
A language, worthy the great MIND, that speaks!
Preface, and comment, to the sacred page!
Which oft refers its reader to the skies,
As pre-supposing his first lesson there,
And scripture-self a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wisdom, to the wise!
Stupendous book! and open'd, night! by thee.

By thee much open'd, I confess, O night!
Yet more I wish; but how shall I prevail?
O night, gentle night! whose modest, maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and present
The world's great picture soften'd to the sight;
O night, kinder far, far more indulgent still,
O night, thou, whose mild dominion's silver key
Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view
Worlds beyond number; worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud, and envious star of noon!
Canst thou not draw a deeper scene?—and shew
The mighty Potentate, to whom belong
These rich regalia pompously display'd
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
Gaze around; I search on every side—
For a glimpse of HIM my soul adores!
In the chas'd hart, amid the desert waste,

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Pants for the living stream; for him who made her,
 So pants the thirsty soul, amid the blank
 Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess! where? [throne
 Where, blazes his bright court? where burns his
 Thou know'st; for thou art near him; by thee, round
 His grand pavilion, sacred fame reports
 The sable curtain drawn. If not, can none
 Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,
 Who travel far, discover where he dwells?
 A star his dwelling pointed out below.

Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
 And thou, Orion! of still keener eye!
 Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,
 And bring them out of tempest into port!
 On which hand must I bend my course to find him?
 These courtiers keep the secret of their KING;
 I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.

I wake; and waking, climb night's radiant scale
 From sphere to sphere; the steps by nature set
 For man's ascent; at once to tempt and aid;
 To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought;
 Till it arrives at the great goal of all.

In ardent contemplation's rapid car,
 From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.
 How swift I mount! diminish'd earth recedes;
 I pass the moon; and, from her farther side,
 Pierce heaven's blue curtain, strike into remote;
 Where, with his lifted tube, the subtil sage
 His artificial, airy journey takes,
 And to celestial lengthens human sight.

I pause at every planet on my road,
 And ask for HIM who gives their orbs to roll,
 Their foreheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring,
 In which, of earths an army might be lost,
 With the bold comet, take my bolder flight,
 Amid those sovereign glories of the skies,
 Of independent, native lustre, proud;
 The souls of systems! and the lords of life,
 Thro' their wide empires!—what behold I now?
 A wilderness of wonders burning round;
 Where larger suns inhabit higher spheres;
 Perhaps the villas of descending gods!
 Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun;
 'Tis but the threshold of the Deity;
 Or, far beneath it, I am grovelling still.
 Nor is it strange; I built on a mistake;
 The grandeur of his works, whence folly sought
 For aid, to reason sets his glory higher;
 Who built thus high for worms (mere worms to him;)
 O where, Lorenzo! must the Builder dwell?
 Pause, then; and, for a moment, here respire—
 If human thought can keep its station here.
 Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,
 O sun?—Is the sun turn'd recluse?—and are
 His boasted expeditions short to mine?—
 To mine, how short! on nature's Alps I stand,
 And see a thousand firmaments beneath!
 A thousand systems! as a thousand grains!
 So much a stranger, and so late arriv'd,
 How can man's curious spirit not inquire,

What are the natives of this world sublime,
Of this so foreign, un-terrestrial sphere,
Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd?

‘ O ye, as distant from my little home,
‘ As swiftest sun-beams in an age can fly!
‘ Far from my native element I roam,
‘ In quest of new, and wonderful, to man.
‘ What province this, of his immense domain,
‘ Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
‘ Ye borderers on the coast of bliss! what are you?
‘ A colony from heaven? or, only rais'd,
‘ By frequent visit from heaven’s neighbouring realms
‘ To secondary gods, and half divine?—
‘ Whate’er your nature, this is past dispute,
‘ Far other life you live, far other tongue
‘ You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
‘ Than man. How various are the works of God!
‘ But say, what thought? is reason here inthron’d,
‘ And absolute? or sense in arms against her?
‘ Have you two lights? or need you no reveal’d?
‘ Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
‘ And had your Eden an abstemious Eve;
‘ Our Eve’s fair daughters prove their pedigree,
‘ And ask their Adams—“ Who would not be wise?”
‘ Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem’d?
‘ And if redeem’d—is your redeemer scorn’d?
‘ Is this your final residence? if not,
‘ Change you your scene, translated? or by death?
‘ And if by death; what death?—know you disease?
‘ Or horrid war?—with war, this fatal hour,

Europa groans (so call we a small field,
 Where kings run mad.) In our world, death deputed
 Intemperance to do the work of age!
 And, hanging up the quiver nature gave him,
 As slow of execution, for dispatch
 Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay
 Their sheep (the silly sheep they fleec'd before,)
 And tofs him twice ten thousand at a meal.
 Sit all your executioners on thrones?
 With you, can rage for plunder make a god?
 And bloodshed wash out every other stain?—
 But you, perhaps, can't bleed: from matter gross
 Your spirits clean, are delicately clad
 In fine-spun ether, privileg'd to soar,
 Unloaded, uninfected; how unlike
 The lot of man! how few of human race
 By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage
 Self-war eternal!—is your painful day
 Of hardy conflict o'er! or, are you still
 Raw candidates at school? and have you those
 Who disaffect reversions, as with us?—
 But what are we? you never heard of man,
 Or earth; the bedlam of the universe!
 Where reason (undiseas'd with you) runs mad,
 And nurses folly's children as her own;
 Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
 Of holiness, where reason is pronounc'd
 Infallible; and thunders, like a god;
 Even there, by saints, the demons are outdone;
 What these think wrong, our saints refine to right!

- ' And kindly teach dull hell her own black arts;
- ' Satan, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—
- ' But this, how strange to you, who know not man!
- ' Has the least rumour of our race arriv'd?
- ' Call'd here Elijah, in his flaming car?
- ' Past by you the good Enoch, on his road
- ' To those fair fields, whence Lucifer was hurl'd;
- ' Who brush'd, perhaps, your sphere, in his descent,
- ' Stain'd your pure crystal ether, or let fall
- ' A short eclipse from his portentous shade?
- ' O! that the fiend had lodg'd on some broad orb
- ' Athwart his way; nor reach'd his present home,
- ' Then blacken'd earth with footsteps foul'd in hell,
- ' Nor wash'd in ocean, as from Rome he past
- ' To Britain's isle; too, too, conspicuous there!

But this is all digression: where is he,
 That o'er heaven's battlements the felon hurl'd
 To groans, and chains, and darkness? where is he,
 Who sees creation's summit in a vale?
 He, whom, while man is man, he can't but seek;
 And if he finds, commences more than man?
 O for a telescope his throne to reach!
 Tell me, ye learn'd on earth! or blest above!
 Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels! tell,
 Where, your great Master's orb? his planets, where
 Those conscious satellites, those morning-stars,
 First-born of DEITY! from central love,
 By veneration most profound, thrown off;
 By sweet attraction, no less strongly drawn;
 Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; raptur'd, yet serene;

Past thought, illustrious, but with borrow'd beams;
 In still approaching circles, still remote,
 Revolving round the sun's eternal Sire?
 Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies
 To nations—in what latitude?—beyond
 Terrestrial thoughts horizon!—and on what
 High errands sent?—Here human effort ends;
 And leaves me still a stranger to his throne.

Full well it might! I quite mistook my road.
 Born in an age more curious than devout;
 More fond to fix the place of heaven, or hell,
 Than studious this to shun, or that secure.
 'Tis not the curious, but the pious path,
 That leads me to my point: Lorenzo! know,
 Without or star, or angel, for their guide,
 Who worship God, shall find him. Humble love,
 And not proud reason, keeps the door of heaven;
 Love finds admission, where proud science fails.
 Man's science is the culture of his heart;
 And not to lose his plummet in the depths
 Of nature, or the more profound of God.
 Either to know, is an attempt that sets
 The wisest on a level with the fool.
 To fathom nature (ill attempted here!)
 Past doubt is deep philosophy above;
 Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,
 As deeper learn'd; the deepest learning still.
 For, what a thunder of omnipotence
 (So might I dare to speak!) is seen in all!
 In man! in earth! in more amazing skies!

Teaching this lesson, pride is loath to learn—

‘ Not deeply to discern, not much to know,

‘ Mankind was born to wonder, and adore.’

And is there cause for higher wonder still,
Than that which struck us from our past surveys?
Yes; and for deeper adoration too.

From my late airy travel unconfin’d,

Have I learn’d nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo! this;

Each of these stars is a religious house;

I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,

And heard Hosannas ring thro’ every sphere,

A seminary fraught with future gods.

Nature all o’er is consecrated ground,

Teeming with growths immortal, and divine.

The great Proprietor’s all-bounteous hand

Leaves nothing waste; but sows these fiery fields

With seeds of reason, which to virtues rise

Beneath his genial ray; and, if escap’d

The pestilential blasts of stubborn will,

When grown mature, are gather’d for the skies.

And is devotion thought too much on earth,

When beings, so superior, homage boast,

And triumph in prostrations to the throne?

But wherefore more of planets, or of stars?

Ethereal journeys, and, discover’d there,

Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,

All nature sending incense to the throne,

Except the bold Lorenzo’s of our sphere?

Opening the solemn sources of my soul,

Since I have pour’d, like feign’d Eridanus,

My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,
Nor see, of fancy, or of fact, what more
Invites the muse—here turn we, and review
Our past nocturnal landscape wide :—then say,
Say, then, Lorenzo ! with what burst of heart,
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Must man exclaim, adoring, and aghast ?
O what a root ! O what a branch is here !
O what a father ! what a family !
Worlds ! systems ! and creations !—and creations,
In one agglomerated cluster, hung, [hangs ;
* Great VINE, on THEE, on THEE the cluster
The filial cluster ! infinitely spread
In glowing globes, with various being fraught :
And drinks (nectareous draught !) immortal life.
Or, shall I say (for who can say enough ?)
A constellation of ten thousand gems,
(And, O ! of what dimension ! of what weight !)
Set in one signet, flames on the right hand
Of majesty divine ! the blazing seal,
That deeply stamps, on all created mind,
Indelible, his sovereign attributes,
Omnipotence, and love ! that, passing bound :
And this, surpassing that. Nor stop we here,
For want of power in God, but thought in man.
Even this acknowledg'd, leaves us still in debt ;
If greater aught, that greater all is thine.
Dread Sire !—accept this miniature of thee ;

* John xv. 1.

' And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
' In which archangels might have fail'd, unblam'd.'

How such ideas of the Almighty's power,
And such ideas of the Almighty's plan,
(Ideas not absurd) distend the thought
Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
The fulness of the Deity breaks forth
In inconceivables to men, and gods.
Think, then, O think; nor ever drop the thought;
How low must man descend, when gods adore!—
Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast!
Did I not tell thee, ' * We would mount, Lorenzo!
' And kindle our devotion at the stars?'

And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?
And art all adamant? and dost confute
All urg'd, with one irrefragable smile?
Lorenzo! mirth how miserable here!
Swear by the stars, by him who made them, swear,
Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they:
Then thou, like them, shalt shine; like them, shalt rise
From low to lofty; from obscure to bright;
By due gradation, nature's sacred law.
The stars, from whence?—ask Chaos—he can tell
These bright temptations to idolatry,
From darkness, and confusion, took their birth;
Sons of deformity! from fluid dregs
Tartarean, first they rose to masses rude;
And then, to spheres opaque; then dimly shone;

Then brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day.
 Nature delights in progress; in advance
 From worse to better: but, when minds ascend,
 Progress, in part, depends upon themselves.
 Heaven aids exertion; greater makes the great;
 The voluntary little lessens more.

O be a man! and thou shalt be a god!
 And half self-made!—ambition how divine!

O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone!
 Still undevout? unkindled?—tho' high-taught,
 School'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars;
 Rank coward to the fashionable world!

Art thou asham'd to bend thy knee to heaven?
 Curst fume of pride, exhal'd from deepest hell!
 Pride in religion is man's highest praise.

Bent on destruction! and in love with death!
 Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once,
 Were half so sad, as one benighted mind,
 Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.

How, like a widow in her weeds, the night,
 Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits!

How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps
 Perpetual dews, and saddens nature's scene!

A scene more sad sin makes the darken'd soul,
 All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

Tho' blind of heart, still open is thine eye:
 Why such magnificence in all thou seest?

Of matter's grandeur, know, one end is this,
 To tell the rational, who gazes on it—

Tho' that immensely great, still greater he,

' Whose breast, capacious, can embrace, and lodge,
 ' Unburden'd nature's universal scheme;
 ' Can grasp creation with a single thought;
 ' Creation grasp; and not exclude its Sire.'—
 To tell him farther—' It behoves him much
 ' To guard the important, yet depending, fate
 ' Of being, brighter than a thousand suns:
 ' One single ray of thought outshines them all.'
 And if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar
 Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
 His purple wing bedropt with eyes of gold,
 Rising, where thought is now deny'd to rise,
 Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.

Why then persist?—no mortal ever liv'd
 But, dying, he pronounc'd (when words are true!)
 The whole that charms thee, absolutely vain;
 Vain, and far worse!—think thou with dying men
 O condescend to think as angels think!
 O tolerate a chance for happiness!
 Our nature such, ill choice ensures ill fate;
 And hell had been, tho' there had been no God.
 Dost thou not know, my new astronomer!
 Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man?
 Man, turning from his God, brings endless night;
 Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,
 Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
 How deep the darkness! and the groan, how loud!
 And far, how far, from lambent are the flames?
 Such is Lorenzo's purchase! such his praise!
 The proud, the politic, Lorenzo's praise!

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NIGHT THE NINTH.

131

Tho' in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the skies.

For think not thou hast heard all this from me;
My song but echoes what great nature speaks.
What has she spoken? thus the goddess spoke,
Thus speaks for ever:—' Place, at nature's head,
A sovereign, which o'er all things rolls his eye,
Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
But, above all, diffuses endless good;
To whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly;
The vile, for mercy; and the pain'd, for peace;
By whom, the various tenants of these spheres,
Diversify'd in fortunes, place, and powers,
Rais'd in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,
Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)
At that blest fountain-head, from which they stream;
Where conflict past redoubles present joy;
And present joy looks forward on increase;
And that, on more; no period! every step
A double boon! a promise, and a bliss.'
How easy fits this scheme on human hearts!
It suits their make; it sooths their vast desires;
Passion is pleas'd; and reason asks no more;
'Tis rational! 'tis great!—but what is thine?
It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!
Leaves us quite naked, both of help, and hope,
Sinking from bad to worse; few years, the sport
Of fortune; then, the morsel of despair.

Say, then, Lorenzo! (for thou know'st it well)
What's vice?—mere want of compass in our thought.

Religion, what?—the proof of common sense;
 How art thou whooted where the least prevails!
 Is it my fault, if these truths call thee fool?
 And thou shalt never be miscall'd by me.
 Can neither shame, nor terror, stand thy friend?
 And art thou still an insect in the mire?
 How, like thy guardian angel, have I flown;
 Snatch'd thee from earth; escorted thee thro' all
 The ethereal armies; walkt thee, like a god,
 Thro' splendors of first magnitude, arrang'd
 On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet;
 Close-cruis'd on the bright paradise of God;
 And almost introduc'd thee to the throne!
 And art thou still carousing, for delight,
 Rank poison; first, fermenting to mere froth,
 And then subsiding into final gall?
 To beings of sublime, immortal make,
 How shocking is all joy, whose end is sure!
 Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms!
 And dost thou chuse what ends ere well-begun;
 And infamous, as short? and dost thou chuse
 (Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet)
 To wade into perdition, thro' contempt,
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow;
 For, by strong guilt's most violent assault,
 Conscience is but disabled, not destroy'd.

O thou most awful being! and most vain;
 Thy will, how frail! how glorious is thy power!

Tho' dread eternity has sown her seeds
 Of bliss, and woe, in thy despotic breast,
 Tho' heaven, and hell, depend upon thy choice;
 A butterfly comes cross, and both are fled.
 Is this the picture of a rational?
 This horrid image, shall it be most just?
 Lorenzo! no: it cannot,—shall not, be,
 If there is force in reason; or, in sounds
 Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon,
 A magic, at this planetary hour,
 When slumber locks the general lip, and dreams
 Thro' senseless mazes hunt souls un-inspir'd.
 Attend—the sacred mysteries begin—
 My solemn night-born adjuration hear;
 Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust:
 While the stars gaze on this enchantment new;
 Enchantment, not infernal, but divine!
 ' By silence, death's peculiar attribute;
 By darkness, guilt's inevitable doom;
 By darkness, and by silence, sisters dread!
 That draw the curtain round night's ebon throne,
 And raise ideas, solemn as the scene!
 By NIGHT, and all of awful, night presents
 To thought, or sense (of awful much, to both,
 The goddess brings!) By these her trembling fires,
 Like Vesta's, ever burning; and, like hers,
 Sacred to thoughts immaculate, and pure!
 By these bright orators, that prove, and praise,
 And press thee to revere, the DEITY;
 Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever'd awhile,

THE CONSOLATION:

- To reach his throne; as stages of the soul,
- Thro' which, at different periods, she shall pass,
- Refining gradual, for her final height,
- And purging off some dross at every sphere!
- By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world!
- By the world's kings, and kingdoms, most renown'd
- From short ambition's zenith set for ever;
- Sad preface to vain boasters, now in bloom!
- By the long list of swift mortality,
- From Adam downward to this evening knell,
- Which midnight waves in fancy's startled eye;
- And shocks her with an hundred centuries, [thought
- Round death's black banner throng'd, in human
- By thousands, now, resigning their last breath,
- And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear!
- By tombs o'er tombs arising; human earth
- Ejected, to make room for—human earth;
- The monarch's terror! and the sexton's trade!
- By pompous obsequies, that shun the day,
- The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
- Which make poor man's humiliation proud;
- Boast of our ruin! triumph of our dust!
- By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones;
- And the pale lamp that shews the ghastly dead,
- More ghastly, thro' the thick incumbent gloom!
- By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
- The gliding spectre! and the groaning grove!
- By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan
- For the grave's shelter! By desponding men,
- Senseless to pains of death, from pangs of guilt!

' By guilt's last audit ! By yon moon in blood,
 ' The rocking firmament, the falling stars,
 ' And thunder's last discharge, great nature's knell !
 ' By second chaos ; and eternal night'—

BE WISE—Nor let Philander blame my charm ;
 But own not ill-discharg'd my double debt,
 Love to the living ; duty to the dead.

For know, I am but executor ; He left
 This moral legacy ; I make it o'er
 By his command ; Philander hear in me ;
 And heaven in both.—If deaf to these, Oh ! hear
 Florello's tender voice ; his weal depends
 On thy resolve ; it trembles at thy choice ;
 For his sake—love thyself : example strikes
 All human hearts ; a bad example more ;
 More still a father's ; that ensures his ruin.
 As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove
 The unnatural parent of his miseries,
 And make him curse the being which thou gav'st ?
 Is this the blessing of so fond a father ?
 If careless of Lorenzo ! spare, Oh ! spare,
 Florello's father, and Philander's friend ;
 Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him ;
 And from Philander's friend the world expects
 A conduct, no dishonour to the dead.
 Let passion do, what nobler motive should ;
 Let love, and emulation, rise in aid
 To reason ; and persuade thee to be—blest.
 This seems not a request to be deny'd ;
 Let (such the infatuation of mankind !)

'Tis the most hopeless, man can make to man.
 Shall I, then, rise in argument, and warmth?
 And urge Philander's posthumous advice,
 From topics yet unbroach'd?—
 But oh! I faint! my spirits fail!—nor strange!
 So long on wing, and in no middle clime;
 To which my great CREATOR's glory call'd:
 And calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
 Has strok'd my drooping lids, and promises
 My long arrear of rest; the downy god
 (Wont to return with our returning peace)
 Will pay, e'er long, and bless me with repose.
 Haste, haste, sweet stranger! from the peasant's cot
 Thy ship-boy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,
 Whence sorrow never thas'd thee; with thee bring,
 Not hideous visions, as of late; but draughts
 Delicious of well-tasted, cordial, rest;
 Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
 That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play,
 The various movements of this nice machine,
 Which asks such frequent periods of repair.
 When tir'd with vain rotations of the day,
 Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn;
 Fresh we spin on, 'till sickness clogs our wheels,
 Or death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends
 When will it end with me?

—' Thou only know'st,

' Thou, whose broad eye the future, and the past,

' Joins to the present; making one of three

' To mortal thought! Thou know'st, and Thou alone

' All-knowing!—all unknown!—and yet well-known!
' Near, tho' remote! and, tho' unfathom'd, felt!
' And tho' invisible, for ever seen!
' And seen in all! the great, and the minute;
' Each globe above, with its gigantic race,
' Each flower, each leaf, with its small people swarm'd,
' (Those puny vouchers of Omnipotence!)
' To the first thought, that asks, "From whence?"
 declare
' Their common source. Thou fountain running o'er
' In rivers of communicated joy!
' Who gav'st us speech for far, far humbler themes!
' Say, by what name shall I presume to call
' Him I see burning in these countless suns,
' As Moses in the bush? Illustrious Mind!
' The whole creation, less, far less to thee,
' Than that to the creation's ample round.
' How shall I name THEE?—How my labouring soul
' Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
 ' Great system of perfections! mighty cause
' Of causes mighty! cause uncaus'd! sole root
' Of nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
' First father of effects! that progeny
' Of endless series; where the golden chain's
' Last link admits a period, who can tell?
' Father of all that is or heard, or hears!
' Father of all that is or seen, or sees!
' Father of all that is, or shall arise!
' Father of this immeasurable mass
' Of matter multiform; or dense, or rare &c.

118 THE CONSOLATION:

' Opaque, or lucid; rapid, or at rest;
 ' Minute, or passing bound! in each extreme
 ' Of like amaze, and mystery, to man.
 ' Father of these bright millions of the night!
 ' Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,
 ' And thrown the gazer on his knee—or, say,
 ' Is appellation higher still, thy choice?
 ' Father of matter's temporary lords!
 ' Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks
 ' Of high paternal glory; rich endow'd
 ' With various measures, and with various modes
 ' Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
 ' More pale, or bright from day divine, to break
 ' The dark of matter organiz'd (the ware
 ' Of all created spirit :) beams, that rise
 ' Each over other in superior light,
 ' Till the last ripens into lustre strong,
 ' Of next approach to GODHEAD. Father fond
 ' (Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
 ' Of intellectual beings! beings blest
 ' With powers to please Thee; not of passive ply
 ' To laws they know not; beings lodg'd in seats
 ' Of well-adapted joys, in different domes
 ' Of this imperial palace for thy sons;
 ' Of this proud, populous, well-policy'd
 ' Tho' boundless habitation, plann'd by Thee;
 ' Whose several clans their several climates suit;
 ' And transposition, doubtless, would destroy.
 ' Or, oh! indulge, immortal KING! indulge
 ' A title, less august indeed, but more

Endearing; ah! how sweet in human ears!
Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!
Father of Immortality to man!
A theme that * lately set my soul on fire.—
And Thou the next! yet equal! Thou, by whom
That blessing was convey'd; far more! was bought;
Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds
Were made; and one, redeem'd! illustrious light
From light illustrious! Thou, whose regal power,
Finite in time, but infinite in space,
On more than adamantine basis fix'd,
O'er more, far more, than diadems, and thrones,
Inviolably reigns; the dread of gods!
And oh! the friend of man! beneath whose foot,
And by the mandate of whose awful nod,
All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
Thro' the short channels of expiring time,
Or shoreless ocean of eternity,
Calm, or tempestuous (as the spirit breathes,)
In absolute subjection!—and, O Thou
The glorious third! distinct, not separate!
Beaming from both! with both incorporate!
And (strange to tell!) incorporate with dust!
By condescension, as thy glory, great,
Enshrin'd in man! of human hearts, if pure,
Divine inhabitant! the tie divine
Of heaven with distant earth! by whom, I trust,

130 THE CONSOLATION:

' (If not inspir'd) uncensur'd this address
 ' To Thee, to them—to whom?—mysterious power
 ' Reveal'd—yet unreveal'd! darkness in light;
 ' Number in unity! our joy! our dread!
 ' The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin!
 ' That animates all right, the triple sun!
 ' Sun of the soul! her never-setting sun!
 ' Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,
 ' Absconding, yet demonstrable, great God!
 ' Greater than greatest! better than the best!
 ' Kinder than kindest! with soft pity's eye,
 ' Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,
 ' From thy bright home, from that high firmament
 ' Where thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt;
 ' Beyond archangels unassisted ken;
 ' From far above what mortals highest call;
 ' From elevation's pinnacle; look down,
 ' Through—what? confounding interval! thro' all
 ' And more, than labouring fancy can conceive;
 ' Thro' radiant ranks of essences unknown;
 ' Thro' hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd
 ' Round various banners of Omnipotence,
 ' With endless change of rapturous duties fir'd;
 ' Thro' wondrous beings interposing swarms,
 ' All clust'ring at the call, to dwell in thee;
 ' Thro' this wide waste of world; this vista vast,
 ' All fanded o'er with suns; suns turn'd to night
 ' Before thy feeblest beam—look down--down--down
 ' On a poor breathing particle in dust,
 ' Or, lower,—an immortal in his crimes.

NIGHT THE NINTH.

132

His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues, too!
 Those smaller faults, half converts to the right.
 Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
 May see the sun (tho' night's descending scale
 Now weighs up morn,) unpity'd, and unblest!
 In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain;
 Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now;
 And, since all pain is terrible to man,
 Tho' transient, terrible; at thy good hour,
 Gently, ah gently, lay me in my bed,
 My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, so near;
 By nature, near; still nearer by disease!
 Till then, be this, an emblem of my grave:
 Let it out-preach the preacher; every night
 Let it out-cry the boy at Philip's ear;
 That tongue of death! that herald of the tomb!
 And when (the shelter of thy wing implor'd)
 My senses, sooth'd, shall sink in soft repose;
 O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,
 Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by fate,
 First, in fate's volume, at the page of man.—
 Man's sickly soul, tho' turn'd and tost for ever,
 From side to side, can rest on nought but Thee:
 Here, in full trust, hereafter, in full joy;"
 On thee, the promis'd, sure, eternal down
 Of spirits, toil'd in travel thro' this vale.
 Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond;
 For—love Almighty! love Almighty! (sing,
 Exult, creation!) love Almighty, reigns!
 That death of death! that cordial of despair!

132 THE CONSOLATION:

- ‘ And loud eternity’s triumphant song !
- ‘ Of whom, no more;—for, O thou Patron-God!
- ‘ Thou god, and mortal ! thence more God to man !
- ‘ Man’s theme eternal ! man’s eternal theme !
- ‘ Thou can’st not ’scape uninjur’d from our praise.
- ‘ Uninjur’d from our praise can he escape,
- ‘ Who, disembofom’d from the Father, bows
- ‘ The heaven of heavens, to kiss the distant earth !
- ‘ Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul !
- ‘ Against the cross, death’s iron sceptre breaks !
- ‘ From famish’d ruin plucks her human prey !
- ‘ Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes !
- ‘ Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,
- ‘ Deputes their suffering brothers to receive !
- ‘ And, if deep human guilt in payment fails ;
- ‘ As deeper guilt prohibits our despair !
- ‘ Injoins it, as our duty, to rejoice !
- ‘ And (to close all) omnipotently kind,
- “ * Takes his delight among the sons of men.”

What words are these !—And did they come from
heaven?

And were they spoke to man ? to guilty man ?
What are all mysteries to love like this ?
The song of angels, all the melodies
Of choral gods, are wasted in the sound ;
Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,
Tho’ plung’d, before, in horrors dark as night :
Rich prelibation of consummate joy !

Nor wait we dissolution to be blest.

This final effort of the moral muse,
How justly * titled! nor for me alone;
For all that read; what spirit of support,
What heights of Consolation, crown my song!
Then, farewell NIGHT! Of darkness, now, no more:
Joy breaks; shines; triumphs; 'tis eternal day.
Shall that which rises out of nought complain
Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?
My soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join
The two supports of human happiness,
Which some, erroneous, think can never meet;
True taste of life, and constant thought of death;
The thought of death, sole victor of its dread!
Hope be thy joy; and probity thy skill;
Thy patron He, whose diadem has dropp'd
Non gems of heaven; eternity, thy prize:
And leave the racers of the world their own,
Their feather, and their froth, for endless toils:
They part with all for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power;
And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
How must a spirit, late escap'd from earth,
Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, astonish'd, on the ways of men,
Whose lives whole drift is to forget their graves!
And when our present privilege is past,

* The Consolation.

134 THE CONSOLATION:

To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,
 The same astonishment will seize us all.
 What then must pain us, would preserve us now.
 Lorenzo! 'tis not yet too late: Lorenzo!
 Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise;
 That is, seize wisdom, ere she seizes thee.
 For, what, my small philosopher! is hell?
 'Tis nothing, but full knowledge of the truth,
 When truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe;
 And calls Eternity to do her right.

Thus, darkness aiding intellectual light,
 And sacred silence whispering truths divine,
 And truths divine converting pain to peace,
 My song the midnight raven has outwing'd,
 And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes,
 Beyond the flaming limits of the world,
 Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
 Of fancy, when our hearts remain below?
 Virtue abounds in flatterers, and foes;
 'Tis pride, to praise her; penance, to perform.
 'Tis more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
 Lorenzo! rise, at this auspicious hour!
 An hour, when heaven's most intimate with man;
 When, like a falling star, the ray divine
 Glides swift into the bosom of the just;
 And just are all, determin'd to reclaim;
 Which sets that title high, within thy reach.
 Awake, then: thy Philander calls: awake!
 Thou, who shalt wake, when the creation sleeps;
 When, like a taper, all these suns expire;

NIGHT THE NINTH.

135

When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
Plucking the pillars that support the world,
In nature's ample ruins lies intomb'd;
And Midnight, universal midnight! reigns.

END OF THE NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

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B O O K O F J O B.

THrice happy Job long liv'd in regal state,
Nor saw the sumptuous east a prince so great;
Whose worldly stores in such abundance flow'd,
Whose heart with such exalted virtue glow'd.
At length misfortunes take their turn to reign,
And ills on ills succeed; a dreadful train!
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,
And spotted plagues, that mark'd his limbs all o'er
So thick with pains, they wanted room for more?
A change so sad what mortal heart could bear?
Exhausted woe had left him nought to fear;
But gave him all to grief. Low earth he prest,
Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.
His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd,
Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd;
In anguish of their hearts their mantles rent,
And seven long days in solemn silence spent;

138 A PARAPHRASE ON PART

A debt of reverence to distress so great !
 Then Job contain'd no more ; but curs'd his fate.
 His day of birth, its inauspicious light,
 He wishes sunk in shades of endless night,
 And blotted from the year ; nor fears to crave
 Death, instant death ; impatient for the grave,
 That seat of peace, that mansion of repose,
 Where rest and mortals are no longer foes ;
 Where counsellors are hush'd, and mighty kings
 (O happy turn !) no more are wretched things.

His words were daring, and displeas'd his friends ;
 His conduct they reprove, and he defends ;
 And now they kindled into warm debate,
 And sentiments oppos'd with equal heat ;
 Fixt in opinion, both refuse to yield,
 And summon all their reason to the field :
 So high at length their arguments were wrought,
 They reach'd the last extent of human thought :
 A pause ensu'd !—When, lo ! heaven interpos'd,
 And awefully the long contention clos'd.
 Full o'er their heads, with terrible surprise,
 A sudden whirlwind blacken'd all the skies :
 (They saw, and trembled !) from the darkness broke
 A dreadful voice, and thus th' Almighty spoke.

Who gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain,
 Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign ?
 Lifts up his thought against me from the dust,
 And tells the world's Creator what is just ?
 Of late so brave, now list a dauntless eye,
 Face my demand, and give it a reply :

Where didst thou dwell at nature's early birth?
Who laid foundations for the spacious earth?
Who on its surface did extend the line,
Its form determine, and its bulk confine?
Who fix'd the corner-stone? what hand, declare,
Hung it on nought, and fasten'd it in air;
When the bright morning stars in concert sung,
When heaven's high arch with loud Hosannas rung;
When shouting sons of God the triumph crown'd,
And the wide concave thunder'd with the sound?
Earth's numerous kingdoms, hast thou view'd them all?
And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball?
Who heav'd the mountain, which sublimely stands,
And casts its shadow into distant lands?

Who, stretching forth his sceptre o'er the deep,
Can that wild world in due subjection keep?
I broke the globe, I scoop'd its hollow'd side,
And did a basin for the floods provide;
I chain them with my word; the boiling sea,
Work'd up in tempests, hears my great decree;
' Thus far, thy floating tide shall be convey'd;
' And here, O main, be thy proud billows stay'd'

Hast thou explor'd the secrets of the deep,
Where, shut from use, unnumber'd treasures sleep;
Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,
Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea?
Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread,
Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head?

Hath the cleft centre open'd wide to thee?
Death's inmost chambers didst thou ever see?

140 A PARAPHRASE ON PART

E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade
To the black portal thro' the incumbent shade?
Deep are those shades; but shades still deeper hide
My counsels from the ken of human pride.

Where dwells the light? in what refulgent dome?
And where has darkness made her dismal home?
Thou know'st, no doubt, since thy large heart is fraught
With ripen'd wisdom thro' long ages brought;
Since nature was call'd forth when thou wast by,
And into being rose beneath thine eye!

Are mists begotten? who their father knew?
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew?
To bind the stream by night, what hand can boast,
Or whiten morning with the hoary frost?
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions blown,
Touches the sea, and turns it into stone?
A sudden desert spreads o'er realms defac'd,
And lays one half of the creation waste?

Thou know'st me not; thy blindness cannot see
How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.
Canst thou in whirlwinds mount aloft? canst thou
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow?
And when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand, and shade the world with night?

Who launch'd the clouds in air, and bid them roll
Suspended seas aloft, from pole to pole?
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain,
And quench the summer with a waste of rain?
Who in rough deserts, far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile?

There blooms the rose, where human face ne'er shone,
And spreads its beauties to the sun alone.

To check the shower, who lifts his hand on high,
And shuts the sluices of the exhausted sky ;
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains, and her russet plains ;
But, new in life, a chearful prospect yields
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields ;
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,
And earth and heaven are fill'd with rich perfume ?

Hast thou e'er scal'd my wintry skies, and seen
Of hail and snows my northern magazine ?
These the dread treasures of mine anger are,
My fund of vengeance for the day of war,
When clouds rain death, and storms, at my command,
Rage thro' the world, or waste a guilty land.

Who taught the rapid winds to fly so fast,
Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast ?
Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour ?
Who strikes thro' nature with the solemn roar
Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,
And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball ?
Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.

Who drew the comet out to such a size,
And pour'd his flaming train o'er half the skies ?
Did thy resentment hang him out ? does he
Glare on the nations, and denounce, from thee ?

Who on low earth can moderate the rein,
That guides the stars along the ethereal plain ?

Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,
 Their lustre brighten, and supply their force?
 Canst thou the skies benevolence restrain,
 And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain?
 Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,
 Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year?
 Bid Mazzaroth his destin'd station know,
 And teach the bright Arcturus, where to glow?
 Mine is the night, with all her stars; I pour
 Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store.

Dost thou pronounce where day-light shall be born,
 And draw the purple curtain of the morn;
 Awake the sun, and bid him come away,
 And glad thy world with his obsequious ray?
 Hast thou enthron'd in flaming glory, driven
 Triumphant round the spacious ring of heaven?
 That pomp of light, what hand so far displays,
 That distant earth lies basking in the blaze?

Who did the soul with her rich powers invest,
 And light up reason in the human breast?
 To shine, with fresh increase of lustre, bright,
 When stars and suns are set in endless night?
 To these my various questions make reply.

The Almighty spoke; and, speaking, shook the sky.
 What then, Chaldaean fire, was thy surprize!
 Thus thou, with trembling heart, and down-cast eyes
 ' Once and again, which I in groans deplore,
 ' My tongue has err'd; but shall presume no more.
 ' My voice is in eternal silence bound,
 ' And all my soul falls prostrate to the ground.'

He ceas'd: when, lo! again the Almighty spoke;
The same dread voice from the black whirlwind broke.

Can that arm measure with an arm divine?
And canst thou thunder with a voice like mine?
Or in the hollow of thy hand contain
The bulk of waters, the wide-spreading main,
When mad with tempests, all the billows rise
In all their rage, and dash the distant skies?

Come forth, in beauty's excellence array'd;
And be the grandeur of thy power display'd;
Put on omnipotence, and frowning make
The spacious round of the creation shake;
Dispatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow
Triumphant vice, lay lofty tyrants low,
And crumble them to dust. When this is done,
I grant thy safety lodg'd in thee alone;
Of thee thou art, and may'st undaunted stand,
Behind the buckler of thine own right hand.

Fond man! the vision of a moment made!
Dream of a dream! and shadow of a shade!
What worldshast thou produc'd, what creatures fram'd,
What insects cherish'd, that thy God is blam'd?
When, pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood
Calls upon God, importunate for food.
Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,
And stills the clamour of the craving nest?

Who in the cruel ostrich has subdu'd
A parent's care, and fond inquietude?
While far she flies, her scatter'd eggs are found,
Without an owner, on the sandy ground;

Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
 And borrow life from an indulgent sky;
 Adopted by the sun, in blaze of day,
 They ripen under his prolific ray.
 Unmindful she, that some unhappy tread
 May crush her young in their neglected bed.
 What time she skims along the field with speed,
 She scorns the rider, and pursuing steed.

How rich the peacock! what bright glories run
 From plume to plume, and vary in the sun!
 He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,
 Gives all his colours, and adorns the day;
 With conscious state the spacious round displays,
 And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.

Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,
 Perpetual summer, and a change of skies?
 When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind,
 Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind;
 The sun returning, she returns agen,
 Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.

Tho' strong the hawk, tho' practis'd well to fly,
 An eagle drops her in a lower sky;
 An eagle, when, deserting human sight,
 She seeks the sun in her unweary'd flight.
 Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
 So high in air, and seat her on a clift,
 Where far above thy world she dwells alone,
 And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own;
 Thence, wide o'er nature takes her dread survey,
 And with a glance predestinates her prey?

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She feasts her young with blood, and, hovering o'er
The unslaughter'd host, enjoys the promis'd gore.

Know'st thou how many moons, by me assign'd,
Roll o'er the mountain goat, and forest hind;
While pregnant they a mother's load sustain?
They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.
Heal are their young, from human frailties freed;
Walk unsustain'd, and unassisted feed;
They live at once; forsake the dam's warm side;
Take the wide world, with nature for their guide;
Bound o'er the lawn, or seek the distant glade;
And find a home in each delightful shade.

Will the tall reem, which knows no lord but me,
Low at thy crib, and ask an alms of thee?
Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,
Break thy stiff clod, and o'er the furrow smoke?
Since great his strength, go trust him, void of care;
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year;
Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,
And cast his load among thy gather'd stores.

Didst thou from service the wild-ass discharge,
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large,
Thro' the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,
And lose himself in his unbounded home?
By nature's hand magnificently fed,
His meal is on the range of mountains spread;
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,
He sees in distant smoke the city throng;
Conscious of freedom, scorns the smother'd train,
The threat'ning driver, and the servile rein.

Survey the warlike horse! didst thou invest
 With thunder, his robust distended chest?
 No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays;
 'Tis dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze;
 To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
 And triumphs in the fulness of his might;
 High-raised he snuffs the battle from afar,
 And burns to plunge amid the raging war;
 And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
 And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.
 How does his firm, his rising heart, advance
 Full on the brandish'd sword, and shaken lance;
 While his fix'd eye-balls meet the dazzling shield,
 Gaze, and return the lightning of the field!
 He sinks the sense of pain in gen'rous pride,
 Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side;
 But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast
 Till death; and when he groans, he groans his last.

But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
 Grimly majestic in his lonely walks;
 When round he glares, all living creatures fly;
 He clears the desert with his rolling eye.
 Say, mortal, does he rouse at thy command,
 And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand?
 Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
 And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
 Where bent on death lie hid his tawny brood,
 And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood;
 Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,
 In darkness wrapt, and slumber o'er their prey?

By the pale moon they take their destin'd round,
 And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground.
 Now shrieks, and dying groans, the desert fill;
 They rage, they rend, their ravenous jaws distil
 With crimson foam; and, when the banquet's o'er,
 They stride away, and paint their steps with gore;
 In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,
 And shudders at the talon in the dust.

Mild is my behemoth, tho' large his frame;
 Smooth is his temper, and repress his flame,
 While unprovok'd. This native of the flood
 Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food;
 Earth sinks beneath him, as he moves along
 To seek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.
 See, with what strength his harden'd loins are
 bound,

All over proof, and shut against a wound.
 How like a mountain-cedar moves his tail!
 Nor can his complicated sinews fail.
 Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass
 The bars of steel; his ribs are ribs of brass;
 His port majestic, and his armed jaw,
 Give the wide forest, and the mountain, law.
 The mountains feed him; there the beasts admire
 The mighty stranger, and in dread retire:
 At length his greatness, nearer they survey,
 Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.
 The fens and marshes are his cool retreat,
 His noon-tide shelter from the burning heat;

148 A PARAPHRASE ON PART

Their sedgey bosoms his wide couch are made,
And groves of willows give him all their shade.
His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fir'd with drought,
He trusts to turn its current down his throat;
In lessen'd waves it creeps along the plain:
He sinks a river, and he thirsts again.

Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,
Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide:
With slender hair leviathan command,
And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.
Will he become thy servant? will he own
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown?
Or with his sport amuse thy leisure day,
And, bound in silk, with thy soft maidens play?

Shall pompous banquets swell with such a prize?
And the bowl journey round his ample size?
Or the debating merchants share the prey,
And various limbs to various marts convey?
'Thro' his firm skull what steel its way can win?
What forceful engine can subdue his skin?
Fly far, and live; tempt not his matchless might;
The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight;
The rashest dare not rouse him up: who then
Shall turn on me, among the sons of men?

Am I a debtor? hast thou ever heard
Whence come the gifts which are on me conferr'd?
My lavish fruit a thousand valleys fills,
And mine the herds, that graze a thousand hills:
Earth, sea, and air, all nature is my own;
And stars and sun are dust beneath my throne.

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And dar'st thou with the world's great father vie,
Thou, who dost tremble at my creature's eye?

At full my large leviathan shall rise,
Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous size.
Who, great in arms, e'er stripp'd his shining mail,
Or crown'd his triumph with a single scale?
Whose heart sustains him to draw near? behold,
Destruction yawns; his spacious jaws unfold,
And, marshal'd round the wide expanse, disclose
Teeth edg'd with death, and crowding rows on
rows:

What hideous fangs on either side arise!
And what a deep abyfs between them lies!
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet found,
The one how long, the other how profound.

His bulk is charg'd with such a furious soul,
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll,
As from a furnace; and, when rous'd his ire,
Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.
The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas,
Thy terror, this thy great superior please;
Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state;
His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete;
His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part;
As steel his nerves, as adamant his heart.

When, late awak'd, he rears him from the floods,
And, stretching forth his stature to the clouds,
Writhes in the sun aloft his scaly height,
And strikes the distant hills with transient light,

150 A PARAPHRASE ON PART

Far round are fatal damps of terror spread,
The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.

Large is his front; and, when his burnish'd eyes
Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise.

In vain may death in various shapes invade,
The swift-wing'd arrow, the descending blade;
His naked breast their impotence defies;
The dart rebounds, the brittle fauchion flies.
Shut in himself, the war without he hears,
Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears;
The cumber'd strand their wasted volleys strow;
His sport, the rage and labour of the foe.

His pastimes like a caldron boil the flood,
And blacken ocean with the rising mud;
The billows feel him, as he works his way;
His hoary footsteps shine along the sea;
The foam high-wrought, with white, divides the
green,

And distant sailors point where death has been.

His like earth bears not on her spacious face:
Alone in nature stands his dauntless race,
For utter ignorance of fear renown'd.
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around;
Makes every swoln, disdainful heart, subside,
And holds dominion o'er the sons of pride.

Then the Chaldaean eas'd his lab'ring breast,
With full conviction of his crime oppress'd.

'Thou can'st accomplish all things, Lord of might!
'And every thought is naked to thy sight.

- ' But oh ! thy ways are wonderful, and lie
- ' Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.
- ' Oft have I heard of thine almighty power ;
- ' But never saw thee till this dreadful hour.
- ' O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of life I see ;
- ' Abhor myself, and give my soul to thee.
- ' Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more :
- ' Man was not made to question, but adore.'

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N O T E S.

IT is disputed among the critics who was the author of the book of Job. Some give it to Moses; some to others. As I was engaged in this little performance, some arguments occurred to me, which favour the former of these opinions; which arguments I have flung into the following notes, where little else is to be expected.

Page 137. *Thrice happy Job, &c.*] The Almighty's speech, chap. xxxviii. &c. which is what I paraphrase in this little work, is by much the finest part of the noblest, and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says, its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper. In order to set this distinguished part of the poem in a fuller light, and give the reader a clearer conception of it, I have abridged the preceding and subsequent parts of the poem, and joined them to it; so that this piece is a sort of an epitome of the whole book of Job.

I use the word paraphrase, because I want another which might better answer to the uncommon liberties I have taken. I have omitted, added, and transposed. The Mountain, the Comet, the Sun, and other parts, are entirely added: the Peacock, the Lion, &c. are much enlarged: and I have thrown the whole into a method more suitable to our notions of regularity. The judicious, if they compare this piece with the original, will, I flatter myself, find the reasons for

the great liberties I have indulged myself in through the whole.

Longinus has a chapter on interrogations, which shews that they contribute much to the sublime. This speech of the Almighty is made up of them. Interrogation seems indeed the proper style of majesty incensed. It differs from other manner of reproof, as bidding a person execute himself, does from a common execution; for he that asks the guilty a proper question, makes him, in effect, pass sentence on himself.

Page 138.

——— *From the darkness broke*

A dreadful voice, and thus the Almighty spoke.]

The book of Job is well known to be dramatic, and, like the tragedies of old Greece, is fiction built on truth. Probably this most noble part of it, the Almighty speaking out of the whirlwind (so suitable to the after-practice of the Greek stage, when there happened *dignus vindice nodus*,) is fictitious; but it is a fiction more agreeable to the time in which Job lived, than to any since. Frequent, before the law, were the appearances of the Almighty after this manner; Exodus, ch. xix. Ezek. ch. i. &c. Hence he is said to ‘dwell in thick darkness: and have his way in the whirlwind.’

Page 139. *Thus far thy floating tide, &c.]* There is a very great air in all that precedes; but this is signally sublime. We are struck with admiration to see the vast and ungovernable ocean receiving commands, and punctually obeying them; to find it like

a managed horse, raging, tossing, and foaming, but by the rule and direction of its master. This passage yields in sublimity to that of 'Let there be light,' &c. so much only, as the absolute government of nature yields to the creation of it.

The like spirit in these two passages is no bad concurrent argument, that Moses is author of the book of Job.

Page 143. *When, pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood, &c.*] Another argument that Moses was the author, is, that most of the creatures here mentioned are Egyptian. The reason given why the raven is particularly mentioned as an object of the care of Providence, is, because, by her clamorous and importunate voice, she particularly seems always calling upon it; thence *κράσσω ἃ κῆραξ*, is to ask earnestly, Aelian. l. ii. c. 48. And since there were ravens on the banks of the Nile more clamorous than the rest of that species, those probably are meant in this place.

Page 143. *Who in the cruel ostrich has subdu'd, &c.*] There are many instances of this bird's stupidity; let two suffice.

First, It covers its head in the reeds, and thinks itself all out of sight.

—*Stat lumine clauso*

Ridendum revoluta caput; creditque latere,

Quae non ipsa videt—

Claud.

Secondly, they that go in pursuit of them, draw the skin of an ostrich's neck on one hand, which proves a sufficient lure to take them with the other.

They have so little brain, that Heliogabalus had six hundred heads for his supper.

Here we may observe, that our judicious as well as sublime author, just touches the great points of distinction in each creature, and then hastens to another. A description is exact when you cannot add, but what is common to another thing; nor withdraw, but something peculiarly belonging to the thing described. A likeness is lost in too much description, as a meaning often in too much illustration.

Page 144. *What time she skims along the field, &c.]* Here is marked another peculiar quality of this creature, which neither flies, nor runs distinctly, but has a motion composed of both, and, using its wings as sails, makes great speed.

Vasta velut Libyae venantum vocibus ales

Cum premitur, calidas cursu transmittit arenas,

Inque modum veli sinuatis flamine pennis

Pulverulenta volat.—

Claud. in Eutr.

Page 144. *She scorns the rider, and pursuing speed.]* Xenophon says, Cyrus had horses that could overtake the goat, and the wild-ass; but none that could reach this creature. A thousand golden ducats, or a hundred camels, was the stated price of a horse that could equal their speed.

Page 144. *How rich the peacock, &c.]* Tho' this bird is but just mentioned in my author, I could not forbear going a little farther, and spreading those beautiful plumes (which are there shut up) into half a dozen lines. The circumstance I have marked of his opening

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his plumes to the sun is true. *Expandit colores adverso maxime sole, quia sic fulgentius radiant.* Plin. l. x. c. 20.

Page 144. *Tho' strong the hawk tho' practis'd well to fly.*] Thuanus (*de Re Accip.*) mentions a hawk that flew from Paris to London in a night.

And the Egyptians, in regard to its swiftness, made it their symbol for the wind; for which reason we may suppose the hawk, as well as the crow above, to have been a bird of note in Egypt.

Ibid. *Thence wide o'er nature takes her dread survey, &c.*] The eagle is said to be of so acute a sight, that when she is so high in air, that man cannot see her, she can discern the smallest fish under water. My author accurately understood the nature of the creatures he describes, and seems to have been a naturalist as well as a poet, which the next note will confirm.

Page 145. *Know'st thou how many moons by me assign'd, &c.*] The meaning of this question is, know'st thou the time and circumstances of their bringing forth? For to know the time only was easy, and had nothing extraordinary in it; but the circumstances had something peculiarly expressive of God's providence, which makes the question proper in this place. Pliny observes, that the hind with young is by instinct directed to a certain herb called *seselis*, which facilitates the birth. Thunder also (which looks like the more immediate hand of Providence) has the same effect, Psal. xxix. In so early an age to observe these things may stile our author a naturalist.

Page 146. *Survey the warlike horse, &c.*] The dea
VOL. II. O †

scription of the horse is the most celebrated of any in the poem. There is an excellent critique on it in the *Guardians*. I shall therefore only observe, that, in this description, as in other parts of this speech, our vulgar translation has much more spirit than the Septuagint; it always takes the original in the most poetical and exalted sense, so that most commentators, even on the Hebrew itself, fall beneath it.

Page 147. *By the pale moon they take their destin'd round, &c.*] Pursuing their prey by night is true of most wild beasts, particularly the lion, *Pf. civ. v. 20*. The Arabians have one among their 500 names for the lion, which signifies the hunter by moon-shine.

Page 148. *He sinks a river, and he thirsts again, &c.*]

Cephisi glaciale caput, quo suctus anhelam

Ferre sitim Python, amnemque avertere ponto.

Stat. Theb. v. 349.

Qui spiris tegeret montes, hauriret hiatu

Flumina, &c.

Claud. Praef. in Ruf.

Let not then this hyperbole seem too much for an eastern poet, tho' some commentators of name strain hard in this place for a new construction, through fear of it.

Ibid. Go to the Nile, and from its fruitful side, &c. The taking the crocodile is most difficult. *Diodorus* says they are not to be taken but by iron nets. When *Augustus* conquered Egypt, he struck a medal, the impress of which was a crocodile chained to a palm tree, with this inscription. *Nemo antea relegavit.*

Ibid. The rashest dare not rouse him up, &c.] *Th*

alludes to a custom of this creature, which is, when satiated with fish, to come ashore, and sleep among the reeds.

Page 149.

—————Behold,

Destruction yawns, his spacious jaws unfold, &c.]

The crocodile's mouth is exceeding wide. When he gapes, says Pliny, *fit totum os*. Martial says to his old woman,

Cum comparata rictibus tuis ora

Niliacus habet crocodilus angusta.

So that the expression here is barely just.

Ibid. Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.]

This too is nearer truth than at first view may be imagined. The crocodile, say the naturalists, lying long under water, and being there forced to hold its breath, when it emerges, the breath long repressed is hot, and bursts out so violently, that it resembles fire and smoke. The horse suppresses not his breath by any means so long, neither is he so fierce and animated: yet the most correct of poets ventures to use the same metaphor concerning him.

Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem.

By this and the foregoing note I would caution against a false opinion of the eastern boldness, from passages in them ill understood.

Page 150. *Large is his front, and when his burnish'd eyes, &c.] His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.* I think this gives us as great an image of the thing it would express, as can enter the thought of man. It is not improbable, that the Egyptians stole their hiero-

glyphic for the morning, which is the crocodile's eye, from this passage, though no commentator I have seen mentions it. It is easy to conceive how the Egyptians should be both readers and admirers of the writings of Moses, whom I suppose the author of this poem.

I have observed already, that three or four of the creatures here described are Egyptian; the two last are notoriously so; they are the river-horse and the crocodile, those celebrated inhabitants of the Nile; and on those two it is that our author chiefly dwells. It would have been expected from an author more remote from that river than Moses, in a catalogue of creatures produced to magnify their Creator, to have dwelt on the two largest works of his hand, viz. the elephant and the whale: this is so natural an expectation, that some commentators have rendered behemoth and leviathan, the elephant and whale, though the descriptions in our author will not admit of it; but Moses being (as we may well suppose) under an immediate terror of the hippopotamos and crocodile, from their daily mischiefs and ravages around him, it is very accountable why he should permit them to take place.

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